THE Best of Remedies, FOR THE VVorst of Maladies: OR,

Spiritual Receipts and Antidotes for the Preservation of a *Plague-sick* Sinfull *Soul.*

Wherein is shown,

Sin is the ***Cause***, and ***Repentance*** the ***Cure*** of the ***Pestilence.***

Seasonably Published by a *Lover* of *Peace* and *Truth*; and one that desireth, that all would (though the Lords hand seems to be withdrawn, as to the late universally raging Pestilential Disease) forsake those *Provoking Sins*, which call for *Vengeance* and *Judgements* on the *Sons* of Men.

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THE 8 9 CAUSES & CURE OF THE Peſtilence.

THe firſt Sin which I ſhall inſiſt upon, ſo highly provoking unto the Lord, to ſend the deſtroying Peſtilence among a people, is the ſin of *Oppreſſion*: When the Supream Powers and Authorities of a Nation, do exerciſe a Uſurpation or Oppeſſion over the Bodies and Conſciences of the people of God. This was the ſin of *Pharoah*, who tyrannized, not onely over the Bodies, but over the Conſciences alſo, of the Children of *Iſrael*; He ſets Task-maſters over them, to afflict them with their burdens; And the *Egyptians* made the Children of *Iſrael* to ſerve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in Morter and in Brick, and in all manner of ſervice in the field; all their ſervice wherein they made them ſerve, was with rigour. By reaſon of which bondage, the Children of *Iſrael* ſighed and cryed, and their cry came up unto God, *Exod.* 1. 11, 13, 14. comp. with *Chap.* 2. 23. So *Chap.* 3. 7. *The Lord ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people which are in* Egypt, *and have heard their*

cry, by reaſon of their Task-maſters, for I know their ſorrows; And in the 9th. *Verſe. Behold the cry of the Children of* Iſrael, *is come up unto me; and I have alſo ſeen the Oppreſſion wherewith the* Egyptians *oppreſs them.* This was an oppreſſion that *Pharoah* and his cruel Task-maſters did exerciſe over their bodies.

The oppreſſion that he exerciſed over their ſouls and conſciences, did evidently appear in this. The Lord he called, and commiſſionated *Moſes* to go unto *Pharoah*, and he with the Elders of *Iſrael*, were to ſay unto him; *The Lord God of the* Hebrews *hath met with us, and now let us go (we beſeech thee) three days journey into the Wilderneſs, that we may ſacrifice unto the Lord our God*, Exod. 3. 18. This they often preſt upon him: And the reaſon wherefore they ſo much urged it is very obſervable, in the 3d. *Verſ.* of the 5th. *Chap. Let us go we pray thee three days journey into the Deſart, and ſacrifice unto the Lord our God, leſt he fall upon us with Peſtilence, or with the Sword*; That is, Leſt he ſlay us and deſtroy us with Peſtilence, and with the Sword, as in *Judges* 8. 21. *Pharoah* he hardens his heart, and is diſobedient unto the word of the Lord. And *Pharoah* ſaid, who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey his voice, to let *Iſrael* go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let *Iſrael* go. They be idle (ſaith he) therefore they cry, ſaying; *Let us go and Sacrifice unto our God*, Exod. 5. 2, 8, 17. But the Judgments of God purſuing him at the very heels, and the greivous ſwarm of Flies coming into his houſe, and into his ſervants houſes, and into all the Land of *Egypt*; ſo that the Land

was

was corrupted by reason of the swarm of Flies: then he calls for *Moses* and *Aaron*, that they might go and Sacrifice to God; but where? in the Land, that is, in his own Land, the Land of *Egypt*. But what said *Moses*? *It is not meet so to do, for we shall sacrifice the abominations of the* Egyptians *to the Lord our God; Lo, shall we Sacrifice the abominations of the* Egyptians *before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days journey into the Wilderness, and Sacrifice unto the Lord our God, as he shall command us.* It is not meet, or it is not right to to do, as being not so appointed of God, who called into the Wilderness to Sacrifice, *Exod.* 3. 18. *Shall we Sacrifice the abominations of the* Egyptians? That is, *The Beasts which the* Egyptians *do worship, and do abhor to kill, or to see killed for Sacrifice.* And the Sentence twice repeated, may imply two senses.

1. Shall we Sacrifice to our God, such things as the *Egyptians* Sacrifice, that would be an abomination to the Lord?

Or, 2. Shall we Sacrifice such things as God requireth, that would be an abomination to the *Egyptians*.

The Scripture often calling the Gods and Services of the Heathens, Abominations; As *Deut.* 7. 25. *and* 12. 30, 31. 2 *King.* 23. 13. *Ezra* 9. 1. *Isa.* 44. 19. Now the principal Sacrifices of the *Hebrews* were Oxen and Sheep, *Gen.* 15. 9. And all Shepherds, or Sheep-keepers were an abomination to the *Egyptians*. Gen. 46. 34. For the *Egyptians* abstained from Sheep, and Sacrificed Goats. By all which it is very evident, that

Pharoah denying the *Israelites* to Worship, as God had appointed them, did oppress them, not only in their bodies, but in their Consciences likewise; which drew down the dreadful Judgments of God upon him and his Land; among which; this of the destroying Pestilence. For proof whereof, see *Exod.* 3. 19, 20. *I am sure* (saith the Lord) *that the King of* Egypt *will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand* And what follows? *I will stretch out my hand and smite* Egypt *with all my wonders, &c.* So *Exod* 9. 13, 14, 15. *Thus saith the Lord God of the* Hebrews, *Let my people go, that they may serve me; for I will at this time send all my plagues upon thy heart, &c.* and especially in the 15. *Vers. For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with Pestilence, and thou shalt be cut off from the Earth.* And in the 12. *Chap.* and 29. *Vers.* See what a dreadful slaughter the Lord made accordingly in the Land of *Egypt. And it came to pass, that at Mid-night the Lord smote all the first-born in the Land of* Egypt, *from the first-born of* Pharoah *that sat on his Throne, unto the first-born of the Captive that was in the Dungeon, and all the first-born of Cattel; and there was a great cry in* Egypt, *for there was not a House where there was not one dead.* See further the severity of God in punishing this sin of *Oppression*, Jer. 34. 17. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord, ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour; Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the* Lord, *to the Sword, to the Pestilence, and to the Famine, and I will make*

you

you to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the earth. So highly displeasing it is unto the Lord, for a people to be oppressed, either in their civil or spiritual liberties and enjoyments, according to that in *Psa.* 12. 5. *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise (saith the Lord) I will set him at safety from him that puffeth at him.* And further, in *Isa.* 49. 25, 26. A dreadful place to all cruel Oppressors of Gods people; saith the Lord there, *I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy Children; And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine;* And *Amos* 2. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of* Israel, *and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof;* Why? *Because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.* So *Isa.* 52. 4, 5, 6. *Thus (saith the Lord) my people went down aforetime into* Egypt *to sojourn there, and the* Assyrian *oppressed them without cause; Now therefore what have I here, (saith the Lord) that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them, make them to howl, (saith the Lord) and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my name, therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak, behold it is I.* By which it is very evident that the Lord does not onely intimate unto us, how sorely he plagued the *Egyptians*, because they had grievously afflicted and oppressed his people, which voluntarily, and of their own accord went down into *Egypt*, but also that he will much more grievously plague the

Assyrians that carried them away out of their own Land, the Land of *Canaan*, which he had given them for an Inheritance, and there dealt so cruelly and unmercifully with them.

So sorely displeasing is it unto the Lord, when those that rule over his people, shall make them to howl; that is, to cry bitterly, to mourn and lament so ely, as it is rendred, *Jer.* 4. 8. and *Ezek.* 21. 12. To this agrees that in the 50th. *Chap.* of *Jeremiah*, and the 33, and 34. *Verses*. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, The Children of* Israel, *and the Children of* Judah *were oppressed together, and all that took them Captives held them fast, they refused to let them go. Their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is his name, he shall throughly plead their cause, that he may give rest unto the Land, and disquiet the Inhabitants of* Babylon. What we may understand by the Lords pleading of the cause of his people here, and disquieting the inhabitants of *Babylon* that oppressed them, that of *Jerem.* 51. 35, 36. doth evidently declare. *The violence done to me and to my flesh, be upon* Babylon *shall the Inhabitants of* Sion *say, and my blood upon the Inhabitants of* Chaldea, *shall* Jerusalem *say. Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee, and I will dry up her Sea, and make her Springs dry.* When the Lord shall plead the cause of *Sion*, then will he take vengeance for her, that is, he will avenge himself of his and her cruel oppressing enemies; According to that which the Lord of Hosts, the mighty one of *Israel* speaks in *Isa.* 1. 24. *Ah, I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies.*

This

This is the time when he will make his Arrows drunk with blood, and his Sword to devour flesh. And then what follows? *Rejoyce O ye Nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his Servants, and will render vengeance unto his Adversaries, and will be merciful unto his Land, and to his people*; As it is in *Deut.* 32. 42, 43. This is that time which is called by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *The day of the Lords vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversies of* Sion, *Isa.* 34. 8. called by *Jeremiah*, *the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his Temple*, Jer. 50. 28. And take notice then how severe the Lord will be. He tells us, that his Sword shall be bathed in Heaven, and it shall come down upon *Idumea*, and upon the people of his curse to Judgement. By *Idumea*, we are to understand *Edom*, or the *Edomites*, who were the nigheſt Kindred of the *Israelites*, but notwithstanding they were their greateſt enemies and oppressors; And therefore said the Lord, by the Prophet *Obadiah*, *Vers.* 10. *For thy violence* (meaning the *Edomites*) *against thy Brother* Jacob, *shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.* And these are a Type and Figure of all the enemies of the Church of God, who indeed do boast and brag that they are descended and born of the Church, crying up the Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, setting up a Worship of their own devising, and are in the practise of Sacraments and Ordinances, as the true Church and Spouse of Christ; yet, indeed, and in truth, do hate, persecute, and oppress the true spiritual and sincere worship-

pers of Jesus. Whereby it is very evident, what dreadful plagues and punishments the sin of oppression doth bring upon a Land and Nation.

2. The second Pestilential sin, is the sin of *Persecution*, and *hatred against God and his people*: As God hath his Arrows of his deliverance for the preservation of his people against their enemies, 2 *King.*13.17. So he hath the Arrows of his Indignation and wrath, which *Job* being under a spirit of desertion and temptation apprehended were within him, the poison whereof he said did drink up his spirit, *Job* 6.4. So *David* in the like condition, *That the arrows of the Lord did stick fast in him, and his hand pressed him sore*, Psal.38.2. And the Prophet *Jeremy* in his *Lamentations*; *He hath bent his bow* (saith he) *and set me as a mark for the Arrow. He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins*, Lam.3.12,13. I say whatever might be the apprehensions of these holy and righteous men, yet surely the Lord has his arrows of his sore displeasure and wrath, which as the instruments of death, he hath prepared and ordained against the *Persecutors*, Psal.7.13. And this of the destroying Pestilence is one of the sorest and sharpest of them, as reckoned amongst his four sore judgements, Ezek. 14.21. And as the wicked *do bend their bow, and make ready their arrows upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart*, Psal. 11.2. So the Lord he has his bow and arrows, and his Bow is bent also, and his arrows he hath ready, *Psa.*7.12. which he sends out and scatters his enemies with, *Psal.*18.14. With these he breaks their bones and

Pierces

pierces them through, *Num.*24.8. yea, makes them drunk with their blood, *Deut.*32.42. Theſe are ſharp in the heart of the Kings enemies, Pſal.45.5. The Inſtruments and means that the Lord makes uſe of againſt his enemies are piercing, yea ſo piercing, that the heart, the cloſeſt and ſtrongeſt part, even that wherein life conſiſteth, ſhall be peirced thereby. The arrows of the Lord are like the ſwords of *Saul* and *Jonathan* which did execution and returned not empty, 2 *Sam.*1.22. You think by flying away and hiding your ſelves in the thickets of the forreſt, you ſhall be ſecured from the ſtroke of theſe arrows of Gods vengeance; but know, if you are Gods Enemies and perſecutors, his *hand will find you out, yea his right hand will finde out thoſe that hate him; and he will make you as a fiery oven in the time of his anger*, Pſal.21.8,9. *For wickedneſs burneth as fire, and it ſhall devour the briars and thorns, and ſhall kindle in the thickets of the forreſt, and they ſhall mount up as the lifting up of ſmoke; for through the wrath of the Lord of Hoſts the land ſhall be darkned, and the people ſhall be as the fewel of the fire, no man ſhall ſpare his brother*, Iſa. 9.18, 19. I ſay, if you be the Lords Adverſaries, then if the Scriptures be true and cannot be broken, you ſhall aſſuredly be broken in peices, yea out of heaven will the Lord thunder upon you, 1 *Sam.*2.10. And if that will not do, he will throw you into the deeps, as a ſtone into the mighty waters, as he dealt with the perſecutors of his people, *Neh.*9.12. I cannot let paſs thoſe dreadful imprecations which the Prophet *David* thundereth out againſt his and the Lords Adverſaries, under the perſon of *Judas*; Set a wicked

man

man over him (ſaith he) Let Satan ſtand at his right hand; let him be condemned and his prayer become ſin, and his days few, and his children fatherleſs, and vagabonds, begging their bread; and ſuch like prophetical direful wiſhes; And why all this? *Becauſe that he remembred not to ſhew mercy, but perſecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even ſlay the broken in heart*, Pſa. 109. to ver. 17. to Pſa 69. verſe 22. and onward; *Let their table become a ſnare before them, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare, let it become a trap: Let their eyes be darkned that they ſee not, and make their loins continually to ſhake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitations be deſolate, and let none dwell in their tents. Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come unto thy righteouſneſs: Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.* Now what's the reaſon that *David* devoteth his and the Lords enemies to ſuch dreadful deſtructions? why? even for this cauſe; *For they perſecute him whom thou haſt ſmitten, and talk to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded.* By all which he meaneth, that the wicked laid grievous afflictions and puniſhments upon ſuch, whom the Lord in his fatherly love had chaſtiſed, whether you underſtand it of Chriſt or of his afflicted and perſecuted members: This is a ſin that is highly provoking unto the Lord, drawing down the wrath of God to a Kingdoms inevitable deſolation and deſtruction; as upon *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. where it is ſaid, That *the Lord God of their fathers ſent to them by his meſſengers*, or prophets, *riſing*

up

up betimes and ſending, becauſe he had compaſſion on his people, and on his dwelling place. But they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people, till there was no remedy, or no healing; becauſe on the one ſide the people repented not, and on the other ſide Gods Juſtice required that their impenitency ſhould be moſt ſeverely puniſhed. Its a ſimilitude taken from ſick bodies that are incurable; *For* (as *Stephen* ſaid truly, whom they ſtoned) *which of the Prophets have not your fathers perſecuted? and they have ſlain them which ſhewed before of the coming of the Juſt one* (meaning Chriſt) *of whom* (ſaith he) *ye have been now the betrayers and murderers,* Acts 7.52. And therefore it was that our bleſſed Saviour took up that ſad lamentation and complaint; *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* And what follows? *Behold your houſe is left unto you deſolate,* Matth. 23.37,38. Perſecution is the certain forerunner of a Nations deſolation and deſtruction. And God does uſually retaliate the ſin of perſecuting and deſtroying men upon their own heads; *Let their way be dark and ſlippery, and let the Angel of the Lord perſecute them,* Pſal. 35.6. *As the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame ſetteth the mountains on fire, ſo perſecute them with thy tempeſt, and make them afraid with thy ſtorm: Fill their faces with ſhame that they may ſeek thy name: O Lord, let them be confounded and troubled for ever, yea let them be put to ſhame*

and

and perish: That men may know, that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth, Psal. 83. 15,16,17,18. And who are they whom the Psalmist imprecates these dreadful judgments to fall upon, but Gods Enemies and Persecutors? *For lo, thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head, they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a Nation; that the name of* Israel *may be no more in remembrance.* God has his hidden ones, such whose life is hid with Christ in God, *Col.*3.3. whom the Lord esteems as his jewels, keeping them in faithful and safe custody, hiding them in the secret of his presence from the pride of man, which betake themselves to the Lord for refuge to be hid and secure under his tuition and protection, *Psal.* 27.5. and 31. 20. And these are they that the enemies of God did consult and conspire against, even to extirpate them, and to root them out of the land. But see how just the Lord is in the execution of his righteous and terrible judgements upon such: *Thou shalt take up this proverb* (saith the Lord) *against the King of* Babylon *and say, How hath the Oppressor ceased? the golden City ceased? the Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the Scepter of the Rulers. He that smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke* (mark that) *he that ruled the Nations in anger is persecuted, and none hindereth,* Isa.14.4,5,6. O that this were seriously laid to heart by the persecuting spirits of this generation; whether Gods controversie with the Kingdom at this time, in this sore visitation

of

of the Plague among us, doth not in a great measure ſpring from this evil and bitter root; ſo heinous and provoking ſin it is unto the Lord.

3. The third peſtilential deſtroying ſin, is the ſin of *Murder* and *Blood-ſhed* that is exerciſed upon the people of God. See *Jer.*50.11,12 13. the dreadful threatnings of the Lord againſt *Babylon* for this very ſin: *Becauſe ye were glad* (ſaith the Lord) *becauſe ye rejoyced, O ye deſtroyers of mine heritage, becauſe ye are grown fat as the heifer at graſs, and bellow as bulls:* Mark, they were the deſtroyers of Gods heritage, that was their ſin; and now what muſt be their puniſhment? *Your mother ſhall be ſore confounded, ſhe that bare you ſhall be aſhamed; behold the hindermoſt of the Nations ſhall be a wilderneſs, a dry land and a deſert; becauſe of the wrath of the Lord it ſhall not be inhabited, but it ſhall be wholly deſolate, every one that goeth by* Babylon *ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and hiſſat all her plagues.* So in *Jer.*51.34,35. The Church complains there, that *Nebuchadnezzar* King of Babylon had devoured her, and cruſhed her, and made her an empty veſſel, and had ſwallowed her up like a Dragon, and filled his belly with her delicates and caſt her out. What then is the Churches dreadful imprecation hereupon? but that which was mentioned before, *The violence done to me and to my fleſh be upon* Babylon, *ſhall the inhabitants of* Sion *ſay, and my blood upon the inhabitants of* Chaldea *ſhall* Jeruſalem *ſay. Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Behold I will plead thy cauſe, and take vengeance for thee, &c. And* Babylon *ſhall become heaps, a dwelling place for Dragons, an aſtoniſhment, a hiſſing without an inha-*

inhabitant. And in the 33. *Verse*, *The Daughter of* Babylon *is like a threshing floor, it is time to thresh her, yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come.* So *Rev.* 18. 4. God calls his people there to come out of *Babylon*, and wherefore? *that ye be not partakers of her sins* (saith the voice from Heaven) *and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* So in the 8th. *Verse*, *Therefore shall her Plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with Fire, for strong is the Lord who judgeth her.* And what was *Babylons* great sin? *They have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy*, said the Angel of the waters. *Rev.* 16. 6. So *Rev.* 17. 6. *And I saw* (said *John* in a Vision) *the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus: And in her was found the blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth*, Rev. 18. 24. And what follows? *Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand* And again they said, *Allelujah, and her smoke rose up for ever.*

For the speedy execution of which righteous judgements of God, upon this insatiable and blood-thirsty Whore, it is, that the souls under the Altar, that have been slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held, are said to cry with a loud voice, saying, How long Lord, holy

holy and true, doſt not thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the Earth? To which anſwer is made, That they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon, until their Fellow-Servants alſo, and their brethren that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled, *Rev.* 6. 9, 10, 11. That is, ſlain by Antichriſt and his Miniſters, who having Apoſtatized from the faith, ſhould ariſe in the Church of Chriſt ſoon after this, and by their ſpiritual pride and tyranny, oppreſs the Church, and perſecute and kill the Lords faithful Witneſſes, in like manner as the Gentiles the Jews, and other falſe Chriſtians had formerly done, *Rev.* 11. 7. *and* 12. 15, 17. Yet this is very obſervable, as that which may miniſter matter of ſtrong conſolation to the Saints ſuffering under Antichriſts bloody perſecutions, that there is the determinate time of Gods appointed Judgments, and that however for a while the Lord defers his puniſhments, yet he certainly hears the Prayers of his faithful ſervants, and at laſt will be fully avenged on their Adverſaries. And though Antichriſts rage and tyranny is very great, yet it is limited according to the purpoſe and decree of God, who hath determined the number of Martyrs, which number being once accompliſhed, not one drop of blood ſhall be more ſpilt by that man of ſin, that Son of perdition; who (Satan like) worketh with all his power, compelling men by Fines, confiſcation of Goods, Impriſonments, Baniſhments, and the like, to ſubmit unto his ways and laws, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 9. and that under fair and glorious pretences too, for the ſuppreſſing of Errors and

and Hereſies, for the beating down of ſin; for the working of men to conformity and uniformity, and the bringing of them into obedience unto the Church; which to do, if the Eccleſiaſtical power is not ſufficient, the Magiſterial power muſt be made uſe of. But it is very evident, that the Anti-chriſtian religion, conſiſting for the moſt part in Will-worſhip, and in humane traditions and inventions, could never have ſubſiſted to this day, had it not been ſupported by an Arm of fleſh; when as our Lord Jeſus with his Apoſtles and Diſciples, never ſought to the Civil Magiſtrate, or Powers of the World upon that accompt, nor is the Kingdom of Chriſt to be erected and eſtabliſhed in this way of humane force and power. The weapons of our warfare (ſaith the Apoſtle) are not carnal, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. It is the powers of the world that ſhall deſtroy the holy people, *Dan.* 8. 24. It is the Little Horn, the Romiſh Antichriſt, that ſhall make War with the Saints, and prevail againſt them, until the Ancient of days come, and that judgment be given to the Saints of the moſt high, and that the time come that the Saints ſhall poſſeſs the Kingdom, *Dan.* 7. 21, 22. It is he, *that ſhall ſpeak great words againſt the moſt high, and ſhall wear out the Saints of the moſt high, &c. Until the Judgment ſhall ſit, and then they ſhall take away his dominion, to conſume and to deſtroy it unto the end*, *Dan.* 7. 25, 26. *And in one day ſhall* Babylons *Plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire, for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her*, Rev. 18. 8. The ſeverity of the Lord againſt this

this sin of bloodshed and cruelty, that is exercised on the Saints of God, is further set forth in that of the Prophet *Amos* Chap. 1. Vers. 11. (Thus saith the Lord) for three transgressions of *Edom*, and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof; and why? Because he did pursue his Brother with the Sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever. For this also hath the Lord a controversie with the Land; because, by killing and stealing, *&c.* they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, *Hosea* 4. 1, 2, 3. So in the *Psal.* 94. 5, 6. They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage, they slay the widow, and the stranger, and murder the fatherless; yet they say, the Lord shall not see. And what then? O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thy self: Lift up thy self thou Judge of the earth, render a reward to the proud. So highly provoking is it unto the Lord, for any to have a hand in the destroying of Gods heritage; As the *Psalmist* saith, When the Lord shall make inquisition for blood, he will remember them, and not forget the cry of the humble, or of the afflicted.

4. The fourth pestilential and highly provoking sin, is the sin of *Idolatry*, which is the worshipping of false Gods, or the true God in a false manner. This is that sin, that hath greatly incensed the Lord to send this sore Judgement of the Plague or Pestilence, and the Sword among a people, *Judg.* 5. 8. It is said, they chose new gods, then was war in

the gates. When *Israel* forsook the Lord, and his true worship, and fell to the worshipping of the Idol-Gods of the Heathen, then the Lord ever and anon punished them with war. And as the Sword, so the Pestilence brake in among them for this very sin, *Psal.* 106. 28, 29. They joyned themselves also to *Baal-Peor*, and eat the sacrifices of the dead; Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions, and the Plague brake in upon them. See *Num.* 25. 2. to which this in the *Psalmes* doth referre. It is said, they called the people to the Sacrifice of their Gods, and the people did eat and bowed down to their gods. And *Israel* joyned himself to *Baal-peor*, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against *Israel*; so that there died in the Plague, no lesse then four and twenty thousand, and many more had been destroyed had not *Phinehas* stood up and executed judgement, and turned away the wrath of the Lord, and so the Plague was stayed, as in the 30. verse of that 106. *Psalm* comp. with *Num.* 25. 11. *Baal-peor* was the Idol-god of the *Moabites*, and the Daughters of the *Moabites* they called or invited the people to the sacrifices or offerings of their gods; they allured the people by fleshly baites to defile their bodies and souls with whoredom and idolatry, and the people they participated or communicated with them in their idolatry, which sin God in a special manner had forewarned them of, *Exod.* 34. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Take heed to thy self, lest thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee.

But

But ye ſhall deſtroy their Altars, break their Images, and cut down their Groves. For thou ſhalt worſhip no other God, for the Lord whoſe name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Leſt thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do ſacrifice to their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his ſacrifice, and thou take of their Daughters unto thy Sons, and their Daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy Sons go a whoring after their gods. And hence it was, that the Apoſtle *Paul* dehorted the *Corinthians*, leſt they ſhould be guilty of the like ſin, and ſo incurre the like puniſhment, 1 *Cor.* 10. 8. Neither let us commit fornication, as ſome of them committed (meaning ſpiritual as well as corporal uncleanneſs) and fell in one day three and twenty thouſand, though there was four and twenty thouſand fell in all, but three and twenty thouſand of them fell or periſhed in one day.

So when *Moſes* was in the Mount with God, and the People had made them a Molden Calf, and gave it Divine Adoration, ſaying, Theſe be thy gods O *Iſrael* which brought thee up out of the land of *Egypt*; How did the wrath of the Lord begin to wax hot againſt them for to conſume them, had not *Moſes* (his choſen) ſtood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy them; yet, ſaith the Lord, *Nevertheleſs, in the day when I viſit, I will viſit their ſin upon them.*

And the Lord plagued the people, becauſe they made the Calf which *Aaron* made. See *Pſal.* 106. 23. comp. with *Exod.* 32. 4. and 35. verſes. Read

whence was that dehortation of the Apostle likewise in that 1 *Cor.* 10. 7. *Neither* (saith he) *be ye Idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, the people sate down to eat and drink and rose up to play.* The word is used for laughing or rejoycing, *Gen.* 21. 6. here it is meant of their singing and dancing about the Golden Calf they had made, as in the 18. and 19. *verses* of *Exod.* 32. as aforesaid. So *Jer.* 19. 3, 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.* And wherefore will the Lord be so severe? Because they have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have estranged this place, and have burnt incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the Kings of *Judah*, and have filled this place with the blood of *Innocents*; they have built also the high places of *Baal* to burn their Sons with fire for burnt offerings unto *Baal*, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: Therefore, behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will cause them to fall by the Sword before their enemies, *&c.* and their Carkases will I give to be meat for the fowles of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and I will make this City desolate and an hissing: every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss, because of all the *Plagues* thereof. So *Ezek.* 33. 25, 26, 27. Wherefore (thus saith the Lord) ye eat with the blood and lift up your eyes towards your Idols, and shed blood, and shall ye possess the land? *&c.* Thus saith the Lord God. *As I live, surely, they that are in the wastes shall fall by the Sword*, &c. and they

they that be in the Forts, and in the Caves ſhall dye of the *Peſtilence*. For I will lay the Land moſt deſolate, and the pomp of her ſtrength ſhall ceaſe. Hence it is ſaid, that in *Horeb* they provoked the Lord to wrath, ſo that the Lord was angry with them to have deſtroyed them, *Deut.* 9. 8. And *Deut.*32.16,to 21.They provoked him to jealouſie with ſtrenge gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They ſacrificed to Devils,not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom their Fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat them they were unmindful, and had forgotten God that formed them. What then? And when the Lord ſaw it, he abhorred them, becauſe of the provoking of his Sons, and of his Daughters. And he ſaid, I will hide my face from them, I will ſee what their end ſhall be.

For this ſin of *Idolatry* it was that the Lord brought evil upon the houſe of *Jeroboam*, ſmiting all his houſe, in ſo much that he left not to him any that breathed, but took them away, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone; for ſaith the Text, He made him other gods, and molten Images, to provoke the Lord to anger, and did caſt the Lord behind his back. See 1 *King.* 14. 9. comp. with *Chap.* 15. 29. and 30. *&c.* Add to this, that in the 44. of *Jeremiah* the 7. and 8. *Verſ.* Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of Hoſts, the God of *Iſrael*, Wherefore commit ye this great evil againſt your ſouls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and ſucking out of *Judah*, to leave you none to remain; In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works

of your hands, burning incense unto other gods, &c. that ye might cut your selves off, and that ye might be a curse and reproach among all the Nations of the earth. So highly provoking is this sin of Idolatry unto God, as you may see further *Exod.* 20. 4, 5. *Deut.* 6. 14, 15. and 32. 21. which I say (that we may not be mistaken concerning it) doth consist, not only in the worshiping of Idols and false gods, but of the true God in a false manner.

It may be, thou wilt not be so gross, to fall down and give divine Adoration to an Image, yet if thou dost worship God before and by an Image, thou art an Idolater. The Image which the *Jews* made of the true God, is condemned of God himself *Exod.* 32. 8. and they that made it were punished as Idolaters 1 *Cor.* 10. 5, 7. It is therefore a dotage in Popery, to distinguish between Idol and Image, and to make the Picture of a false god onely to be an Idol; not considering, that the making of an Image, or the likeness of God, or of any Creature in Heaven or Earth for a religious end, to give it divine adoration and worship, or to worship God by it, is Idolatry, forbidden by the Scriptures, even by the Lord himself, *Deut.* 5. 8, 9. *Thou shalt not make thee any graven Image, or any likeness of any thing*, &c. *Thou shalt not bow down thy self unto them, nor serve them.*

2ly. *Idolatry* may be said to be *all humane inventions and traditions of men, thrust into the divine worship and service of God*, Deut. 12. 32. Whatsoever I command you, saith the Lord, that observe and do, thou shalt not add thereto, &c. So said our blessed Saviour, *In vain they do worship me, teaching for*

for Doctrines the Commandments of men. And you transgress (or reject, frustrate and make void) the commandments of God by your traditions, *Matth.* 15.3.9. *Mark.*7.9. Therefore all traditions and superstitions contrary to the Word of God, are to be avoided and abhorred by all who will be found worshipping of God in spirit and in truth, according to his own institution and prescription.

3ly. The setting the heart inordinately upon any creature, by fearing, loving, and trusting in it more then in God, and above God, is Idolatry in Gods account. *Phil.*3.19. The Apostle complains of some, whose God was their belly; and the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of setting up of Idols in the heart. *Ezek.* 14.2,4.

4ly. The immoderate love unto, and the distrustful care for the things of this life, falls under this denomination of Idolatry. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *That no unclean person, or covetous man who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,* Eph.5.5. the one makes his lust, the other his mony his God. And the Apostle in *Col.* 3.5. among other the sins and lusts of the flesh, calls Covetousness Idolatry; For which things sake (saith he) the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. All these kinds of Idolatries by the Apostle *Peter* are expresst I conceive, under the name and title of abominable Idolatries, 1*Pet.*4.3. Hence it is, I suppose, that *John* in the conclusion of his Epistle hath this exhortation to the beleivers of his time, *Little children keep your selves from Idols.* Now all Idols being vanities, and the work of errors, which in the time of their visitation shall perish,

sish, *Jer* 10.15. Then it must needs follow, That they that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy, *Jon.*2.8. And this is the fourth Pestilential sin, so highly provoking the Lord:

5. The fifth pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of *Covetousness*, consisting in a greedy inordinate desire after gain, unto which evill whosoever is subject is the servant and slave of all other sins. So insatiable and unsatisfied he is, that like the man that hath the Dropsie, the more he drinketh, the more he thirsteth. This sin of Covetousness is called Idolatry, *Col.*3.5. and *Ephes.*5.5. Because the covetous person not only prefers his treasure before God, but doth place the happiness and felicity of his life in his substance; like the fool in the Gospel, *Luk.* 12. 15, 16. And what sin is there that is more provoking unto the Lord, or that pulls down more the wrath of God upon a Nation or Kingdom, as I instanced before, then the sin of Idolatry? *For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience*, *Col.*3.6. So abhorring a sin it is unto the Lord, *Psal.*10.3. The wicked blesseth the Covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth. And therefore I finde it rankt with those other aforementioned so highly provoking sins of *Bloodshed*, *Oppression* and *Persecution*, Jer. 22.17. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence to do it. And what before? Wo unto him, that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong: Shalt thou reign because thou closest

ſeſt thy ſelf in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgement and juſtice, and then it was well with him? *&c. Jer.*22. 13,15. The like woe or denunciation of judgement againſt this vile provoking ſin, you have in *Iſa.*5.8,9. Woe unto them that joyn houſe to houſe, that lay field to field, till there be no place; that is, for the poor to dwell, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the earth. And mark what follows, *In mine ears ſaid the Lord of Hoſts, of a truth many houſes ſhall be deſolate, even great and fair without inhabitants.* O that our great Builders and incloſers of our times, would ſeriouſly lay this Scripture to heart. How many houſes now hath God made deſolate in City and Suburbs? how many great and fair dwellings now ſtand empty without an inhabitant? You have the like woe denounced in *Micha* 2. 1, 2, 3. *Wo to them that deviſe iniquity, and work evil upon their beds, &c. and they covet fields, and take them by violence, and houſes and take them away, ſo they oppreſs a man and his houſe, even a man and his heritage*; And what follows hereupon? *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Behold againſt this Family do I deviſe an evil, from which ye ſhall not remove your necks, neither ſhall ye go haughtily, for this time is evil.* Mark, I pray you, its ſaid they covet fields, and houſes, and take them by violence; If they do but fancy or get a mind to ſuch and ſuch a piece of Land, to ſuch a Houſe, or ſuch like poſſeſſions, they will have it, and force it away from the owners thereof; As *Ahab* in the caſe of *Naboths* Vineyard, 1 *King.* 21. And thus they oppreſs, or practiſe violence upon a man and his houſe, even a man

man and his heritage, or his inheritance, that is, they make him poor and ſad, diſpoſſeſſing and bereaving the Proprietor thereof, which God would in no wiſe allow to be taken away, or alienated from the heir. *Therefore, ſaith the Lord, Behold I deviſe an evil againſt this Family, or againſt this generation:* Even as they wickedly deviſe, contrive and practiſe the evil of ſin, ſo do I now deviſe the evil of puniſhment, that ſhall be executed upon them; from which ye ſhall not remove your necks; the yoke of bondage which ye ſhall be made to undergo, ſhall be ſo cloſe and ſtrong upon you. And from whence proceeds all theſe evil incroachments, theſe violent oppreſſions and practiſes, but from this evil and bitter root of covetouſneſs? Againſt which the Prophet *Habakkuk* comes forth with the like woe, and denunciation of judgment; *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.* And mark what follows? *Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy houſe, by cutting off many people, and haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul; For the ſtone ſhall cry out of the Wall, and the beam out of the Timber ſhall anſwer it. Woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood, and eſtabliſheth a City by iniquity. Behold, is it not of the Lord of Hoſts, that the people ſhall labour in the very fire, and the people ſhall weary themſelves for very vanity,* Hab. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs, that he may ſet his neſt on high,* that is, that ſeeks and practices by all manner of baſe, unworthy, and unwarrantable ways, to inrich himſelf,

ſelf, his wife, children, and poſterity, that he and his family may riſe and become great and famous in the world, and live ſecure and ſafe. A ſimilitude taken from the Eagle and ſuch Birds, as love to build their Neſts in high places. *Obad.* 4. Well, but conſider a little what thou art doing all this while in contriving to be ſo great; Thou haſt but conſulted ſhame to thy houſe, ſaith the Lord, as if he had ſaid, Thou haſt (letting all honour and honeſty alide) raked much riches together, and raiſed great and ſtately Palaces and Places, and filled and adorned the ſame with all manner of rich and ſumptuous furniture, yet all this ſpeaks but thy own ſhame and infamy, becauſe thou haſt accumulated, and heaped all this together, by thy covetous and unworthy practiſes. And thou haſt ſinned againſt thy own ſoul in all that thou haſt done. *And therefore the ſtone out of the Wall ſhall cry*; The very Stones wherewith thy Palaces are built, ſhall teſtifie againſt thee, namely, that thou haſt built them unrighteouſly, by wronging, and injuring of others, which call aloud to God for vengeance againſt thee. *And therefore woe to him that buildeth a City with blood*, or *bloods*, as it is in the Original; that is, with murder, or with the goods of him or them that are ſlain or murdered, or with the ſweat and blood of the people. *Ezekiel* calls it the bloody City; *Woe to the bloody City, I will even make the pile for fire great*, Ezek. 24. 9. So the Prophet *Nahum*; *Woe to the bloody City, or City of bloods, it is full of lies and robberies, the prey departeth not. And therefore, Behold, it is not of the Lord, that the people*

people ſhall labour in the very fire, and weary themſelves for vanity? It is of the Lord ſurely, it comes to paſs by the ſecret counſel of God, that theſe Houſes and Cities which they build, ſhall either come to be conſumed by fire; And what dreadful fires hath hapned amongſt us of late days? or elſe the people ſhall weary themſelves in vain, for vanity and to no purpoſe; ſeeing it comes ſo ſoon to be deſtroyed and ruinated, what they build.

Therefore ſaith the Lord, Behold I have ſmitten my hand at thy diſhoneſt gain which thou haſt made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midſt of thee, Ezek. 22. 13. intimating an abhorring of their wickedneſs, and a purpoſe to proceed againſt them in fury, as is expounded in *Ezek.* 21. 17. *I will ſmite my hands together, and I will cauſe my fury to reſt; I the Lord have ſaid it.* All holding forth the Lords great diſpleaſure againſt this ſore evil, which is more evidently manifeſted, by conſulting ſome few Verſes more in that 22. of *Ezekiel*, beginning at the 24th. *Verſe. Son of man, ſay unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleanſed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.* As if the Lord had ſaid, Thou art the Land that is not amended or reformed by my Judgements, and puniſhments, that hath not had her ſhowers of rain to cleanſe thee; my judgements will not cleanſe thee. As a great ſhowre of rain (you know) is wont to cleanſe and waſh away the filth and dirt of the ſtreets; Thy filthineſs remains ſtill unwaſhed away: But how comes this to paſs? *There is a conſpiracy of her Prophets in the midſt thereof,*

of, like a roaring Lyon ravening the prey: they have devoured ſouls: And what elſe? *They have taken the Treaſure and precious things: they have made her many Widows in the midſt thereof.* They did devour the godly mens eſtates, and bereaved the Women of their Husbands, by their falſe accuſations, and evil practiſes, cauſing them to be put to death.

This was that devouring of Widows houſes, which our bleſſed Saviour ſo ſharply reproved, the *Scribes*, and *Phariſes*, and Hypocrites of thoſe days, and all under a pretence of making long Prayers. *Therefore*, ſaid he, *ye ſhall receive the greater damnation*, Mat. 23. 14. Much like to what the Prophet *Micha* ſpake of in his day, *Micha* 3. 10, 11, 12. *They build up* Zion *with blood, and* Jeruſalem *with iniquity.* The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; Obſerve that, *Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. The Prieſts taught for hire*, that is, out of a covetous diſpoſition, they ſuffered themſelves to be drawn for money to Teach and Preach according to mens Pallates, like to thoſe which *Paul* ſpake to *Titus* of, *who ſubverted whole houſes, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucres ſake*, Tit. 1. 11. Whereas they ſhould have been content with Gods allowance, and held forth the pure Word of God without regard to men. *In whoſe mouths the Law of truth ſhould be, and in whoſe lips iniquity ſhould not be found*, Mal. 2. 6. Thus for the Prieſts; Then for the Prophets, they did

did divine for money, meaning the false Prophets. The Lord implying here, that both in the Civil and Ecclesiastical State among his people all was corrupted, and to be bought and sold for money; Accoding to what the Prophet *Isaiah* complained in his time, *Isa.* 1. 23. *Thy Princes are rebellious and companions of Thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards, they judge not the Fatherless, neither doth the cause of the Widow come unto them.*

Or as he proceeds further in *Ezek.* 22. 26, 27. *Her Priests have violated my law, and have prophaned my holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and prophane, nor between the unclean and the clean. Her Princes in the midst thereof are like roaring wolves, ravening the prey, to shed blood and to destroy souls, and to get dishonest gain.* And yet says the Prophet *Micah*, *They did lean upon the Lord.* How lean upon the Lord? not with a holy trust and confidence (which is ever accompanied with godliness) but in hypocrisie, out of an impudent arrogancy, and a vain, bold and carnal presumption; as if God was engaged to protect them, let them live and do what they pleased; Like those that the Prophet *Isay* speaks of, That swore by the name of the Lord, and made mention of the God of *Israel*, but not in truth, nor in righteousness; And yet they called themselves of the holy City, and staied themselves upon the God of *Israel*, *Isa.* 48. 1, 2. Or like unto them in the Prophet *Jeremies* time, that cried *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, and yet in the mean time they oppressed the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed innocent blood,

and

and did steal, and murder and commit adultery, and swore falsely, *Jer.*7.4,6,9. But how intolerable this was with God, the sequel makes it evident; *Therefore shall Sion for your sakes be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps*, that is, shall be utterly destroyed and laid waste; So little care and regard had God of *Sion* and *Jerusalem*, and of his holy Temple it self, being thus polluted and defiled. And therefore saith the Lord (in *Ezekiel* 32 *ult.*) *have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: Their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord.* So again, for this doth the Lord threaten, That their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together. And he will stretch out his hand upon the inhabitants of the land. For (saith he) from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to Covetousness, and from the Prophet even unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsly, *Jer.*6.12,13. Which avaricious or covetous disposition was so predominant in them in the Prophet *Isaiah's* time, *Isa.*56.10,11. That he termed the *Watchmen* then (which were the Priests and Rulers of the people, as *Jer.*8.10. and *Eze*[illegible] not only blind, and ignorant, and dumb d[illegible] that could not bark, *&c.* but *greedy dogs* also, that could never have enough. Like dogs strong in desire, in lust, in appetite, greedy and unsatiable, that could not be satisfied with money or large revenues. And what follows in the next chapter v.17. *For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, said the Lord, and smote him*; and whether this might not be a smiting with the pestilence,

Deut.

Deut. 28. 22, 27. comp. with *Ezek.* 33. 27. and 31. *verses*; I shall leave it to the wise to judge. How did he smite *Gehazi* with the Plague of Leprosie for this thing? 2 *King.* 5. 27. so highly provoking a sin, is this sin of *Covetousness* unto the Lord. And oh, that this were wisely considered and applied by the men of this Generation, yea by the carnal and earthly minded Professions of our times. For sure it is, *That the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*, 1 Tim. 6. 10.

6. The sixth Pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of *Cursing*, and *Swearing*, and *False-swearing*. This was the sin of *Shemei* that cursed *David*, mentioned in the 2 *Sam.* 16. 5. And see how the Lord did return his wickedness upon his own head, being slain by the Command of King *Solomon*, 1 *King.* 2. 44, 46. This the *Psalmist* lays down as the certain Character of a wicked man, *that his mouth is full of Cursing and deceite*: And what imprecations does he use in his Prayer against him? *Break thou the Armes of the wicked, and the evil man: Seek out his wickedness till thou find none*, Psal. 10. 7, 15. *Rom.* 3. 14. So in the 109. *Psal.* Let Satan stand at his righthand, and when he shall be judged, let him be condemned, and let his prayer become sin, let his days be few, his Children Fatherless, his Wife a Widow, his Children Vagabonds, and beg their bread: Let their be none to extend mercy unto him, let his Posterity be cut off, and in the generation following, let their name be blotted out, let the iniquity

of

of his Fathers be remembred with the Lord, and let not the ſin of his Mother be blotted out, and let the Lord cut off the memory of them from the earth. And mark what follows. As he loved curſing, ſo let it come unto him; as he delighted not in bleſſing, ſo let it be far from him. As he cloathed himſelf with curſing like as with a Garment, ſo let it come into his bowels like water, and like oyle into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually. It is true the Apoſtle *Peter* doth apply ſomething of this to *Judas*, who betrayed our Lord Chriſt, *Act.* 1. 20. But it cannot exclude all other the curſed enemies of Chriſt, who love curſing, and cloath themſelves with it as with a garment. So *Jer.* 23. 9, 10. *Mine heart within me* (ſaith he) *is broken, becauſe of the Prophets, all my bones ſhake*, &c. becauſe of the Lord, and becauſe of the words of his holineſs. For the Land is full of Adulterers, for becauſe of *Swearing the Land mourneth.* To this agreeth that of the Prophet *Hoſea* Chapter 4. 1, 2, 3. verſes. Where it is ſaid, That the Lord hath a Controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land, becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By ſwearing and lying, *&c.* they break out and blood toucheth blood: Therefore ſhall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein ſhall languiſh. The dreadfulneſs of this ſin is further ſet forth by *Zacharies* flying roll, *Zach.* 5. 3, 4. This is the Curſe that goeth forth, over the face of the whole earth, for every one that ſtealeth ſhall be cut off, and every one that ſweareth ſhall be cut off, *&c.* I will bring it forth,

ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the houſe of the Theif, and into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſely by my name; and it ſhall remain in the midſt of his houſe, and ſhall conſume it with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof. And in the 3. of *Malachy* and the 5. I will come near to you to Judgement, and I will be a ſwift witneſs againſt the *Sorcerers*, and againſt the *Adulterers*, and againſt *Falſe-ſwearers*.

O that theſe things were ſeriouſly laid to heart by the prophane Curſers, and Swearers, and Falſe-ſwearers, and the Damme-creatures of our times. O that they would conſider, how their curſed helliſh hideous, new-invented, unheard of, Diabolical oaths, do now make the Land mourn, and thoſe that dwell therein to languiſh! and how near the Lord is come unto them in the terribleneſs of his judgment! Is it not very evident that the Lord for theſe things hath a controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land?

7. The ſeventh Peſtilential deſtroying ſin, is the ſin of *Adultery*, *Fornication*, and ſuch like corporal uncleanneſs. See this in that 25. of *Num.* 1, 6, 7, 8. *verſes*. When *Iſrael* abode in *Shittim*, it is ſaid the people began to commit Whoredome with the daughters of *Moab*. And *Zimri* and *Cosbi* being taken in the very act of uncleanneſs, *Phinehas* the Son of *Eleazar*, the Son of *Aaron* the Prieſt, when he ſaw it, he roſe up from amongſt the Congregation, and took a Javelin in his hand, and he went after the man of *Iſrael* into the Tent, and thruſt both of them through, the man of *Iſrael*, and the woman through her belly: So the Plague

was

was ſtayed thereupon from the Children of *Iſrael*, yet thoſe that died in the Plague, as was mentioned before, was no leſs then Twenty and four Thouſand. So in the 12. of *Gen.* 14, 15, 17. When *Abraham* came into *Egypt* with *Sarai* his wife, a fair woman to look upon, and ſhe was no ſooner beheld by the *Egyptians*, and the Princes of *Pharaoh*, but they commended her before *Pharaoh*; and ſaith the Text, the woman was taken into *Pharaohs* houſe, that is, ſhe was taken away from *Abraham*, into the Royal Seraglio or Palace, to be fitted and prepared there, according to the Cuſtome of thoſe Countries, that the King might take her to Wife, as *Heſt.* 2. 9. In the mean time God provided for *Abrahams* entertainment, and his Wives chaſtity together; for *Pharaoh* entreated *Abram* well for her ſake. And in the 17. *verſe* is is ſaid, *The Lord plagued* Pharaoh *and his Houſe with great Plagues, becauſe of* Sarai, Abrams *wife.* What kind of plagues thoſe were is uncertain, but doubtleſs they ſerved as well to hinder and obſtruct the abuſing of *Sarai*'s body, as to puniſh the King, and his Domeſticks, and Courtiers treſpaſs. This great deliverance *David* celebrateth in *Pſal.* 105. 14. *When they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another* People. *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he reproved Kings for their ſakes*, ſaying, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my* Prophets *no harm.*

But this is obſervable, that if the Lord was ſo ſevere to puniſh this filthy ſin of Adultery, or Uncleanneſs, when it was but deſignedly or intentionally committed (and *Pharaoh* knew not that *Sarai* was *Abrams* wife) with what ſeverity may we think

will he proceed againſt ſuch, who deliberately, knowingly, delightfully and impudently live in the perpetration and commiſſion of it? and when did this ſin of Whoredom, Adultery and Fornication ever walk upon down ſo brazen-faced, with ſuch an imperious woriſh forehead, as in the men and women of our generation? ſo unſatiable they are in their filthineſs and uncleanneſs. Upon which account may not the Lord ſay to this City of *London*, yea to the Land and Nation in general, as he did to *Jeruſalem* in the Prophet *Jeremy*'s time? *How ſhall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forſaken me, and ſworn by them that are no gods: When I had fed them to the full, they then committed Adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes. They were as fed horſes in the morning, every one neighed after his neighbours wife*; Through luſtfulneſs, like wanton horſes: And mark what follows? *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? and ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this? Go ye up upon her walls and deſtroy, but make not a full end; take away her battlements, for they are not the Lords, &c.* Jer. 5.7,8,9,10. And may we not think the Lord may juſtly have a controverſie with the inhabitants of this Land, as he had with the children of *Iſrael* in the Prophet *Hoſea*'s time; And wherefore? Becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; But by ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing, and *committing Adultery* they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore ſhall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein ſhall languiſh, *&c.* *Hoſ.*4.1,2,3. So that good Prophet *Jeremy*, Mine heart (ſaith he) within

within me is broken, becauſe of the Prophets, all my bones ſhake, I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, becauſe of the Lord, and becauſe of the words of his holineſs. For the Land is full of *Adulteries*, *Jer.* 23. 9,10. And in *Jer.*13.27. I have ſeen thine *Adulteries*, and thy neighings, the lewdneſs of thy Whoredoms, &c. What then? *Wo unto thee O Jeruſalem.* This, though it may have reference to their ſin of Idolatry, as before, which may be called ſpiritual Adultery, yet it cannot exclude that which is corporeal, which God will ſeverely puniſh; *For Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge, as ſuch, who ſhall have no inheritance in the Kingdom of Chriſt and of God*, Heb.13.4. and *Eph.*5.5. Thus we ſee how highly provoking this ſin of uncleaneſs is for the bringing down of National judgements, even this of the Peſtilence among a people.

8. The Eighth Sin that provokes the Lord to ſend the Peſtilence among a people, is the ſin of *Infidelity, diſtruſt and murmuring againſt God*, notwithſtanding the great and marvellous works which the Lord hath wrought for the ſalvation and deliverance of his people. See to this purpoſe the 13,and 14. chapters of *Numbers*; There were certain men, the heads of the children of *Iſrael*, who by the commandment of the Lord was ſent to ſearch and ſpie out the land of *Canaan*, and being returned they made a rehearſal thereof to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and to all the congregation, and brought an evil report upon the land which they had ſearched, ſaying, The land through which we have gone to ſearch it, is a land that eateth up the inhabi-

tants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature: And there we saw the giants, the sons of *Anak*, which come of the giants, and we were in our own sight as Grashoppers, and so were we in their sight. This evil report caused all the congregation to lift up their voyce and cry, and to murmure against *Moses* and *Aaron*, saying, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in this wilderness. And wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? and they said one to another, *Let us make a Captain, & let us return into Egypt.* But *Joshua* the son of *Nun*, and *Caleb* the son of *Jephunneth*, which were of them that searched the land, rent their cloaths, and they spake unto all the company of the children of *Israel*, saying, The land which we passed through to search, it is an exceeding good land, if the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us, a land which floweth with milk and honey, *Only rebell not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land: for they are bread for us: Their defence is departed from them, & the Lord is with us; fear them not:* this so greatly incensed the congregation, that they bade stone them with stones. But see how highly provoking was this unto the Lord: *And the Lord said unto* Moses, *How long will this people provoke me, and how long will it be ere they beleive me, for all the signs that I have shewed among them?* And mark what follows; *I will smite them with the Pestilence and disinherit them*, verse 12. *I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that*

are

are gathered together against me; in this wilderneſs they ſhall be conſumed, and there they ſhall die. And further it is ſaid, That the men which *Moſes* ſent to ſearch the land, who returned and made all the congregation to *murmure* againſt him, by bringing up a ſlander upon the land, even thoſe men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died of the *Plague* before the Lord, *verſ.* 35, 36, 37, of the 14. of *Numb.* And the Lord renders the reaſon why their carkaſſes ſhould fall in the Wilderneſs, *v.* 22. *Becauſe all thoſe men which have ſeen my glory* (ſaith he) *and my miracles which I did in* Egypt, *and in the wilderneſs, & have tempted me now theſe ten times, and have not hearkned to my voyce, ſurely, they ſhall not ſee the land, which I ſware unto their fathers, neither ſhall any of them that provoked me ſee it.* So greatly diſpleaſing it is unto the Lord, for a people who have ſeen the wonderful works of the Lord, and his miraculous preſervations, to cheriſh a murmuring, diſtruſting and unbeleiving ſpirit againſt the Lord; not beleiving his promiſes, nor relying on his mighty power, and outſtretched arm to defend them. And therefore ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *was the Lord wroth, and a fire was kindled againſt* Jacob, *and anger alſo came up againſt* Iſrael, *Becauſe they beleived not in God, and truſted not in his ſalvation*, Pſ. 78. 21, 22. So in *Heb.* 3. 17, 18, 19. *With whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had ſinned, whoſe carkaſſes fell in the wilderneſs? And to whom ſware he that they ſhould not enter into his reſt, but to them that beleived not? So we ſee that they could not enter in becauſe of unbeleif.* For this cauſe it was that the Lords wrath was kindled againſt them, ſo that he excluded them out of the good land, Be-

cause they beleived not in God, nor hearkned unto his voyce, but murmured against him, after they had seen his glory, to wit his glorious works, and the miracles that he did in *Egypt* and in the wilderness. See *Exod.* 16.2,3. comp. with *Nehem.* 9. from the 10th. to the 18th. verse. O then that this might be seriously laid to heart, by all such, who having seen the wonderful outgoings, and appearances of God in this latter age of the world, and had a deep share in the glorious deliverances which God had wrought have yet through a heart of infidelity and distrust departed from God, & thereby brought up an evil report upon the good land, even the good and honourable ways of the Lord, shaking hands again with a carnal, corrupt interest, and longing after the flesh-pots, the Onyons and Garlick of Egypt, have turned again to the weak and beggarly elements or rudiments of the world, whereunto they are, as in Egyptian bondage, again captivated and enslaved.

For I intend not here by this spirit of Infidelity and Unbeleif, such carnal, unbeleiving and regenerate persons, to whom, as the Apostle saith, 2 *Cor.* 4.3,4. the Gospel is hid, and are lost, and whose *minds the God of this world hath blinded, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ cannot shine into them*; but such rather, *who with open face, having beheld as in a glasse the glory of the Lord*; even the glory of his grace in the Gospel, and the glory of his great and wonderful works in the world, do yet through base fear, and distrust of his power and promises, suffer their hearts to depart and turn aside from the Lord. And this was the sin of *Asa*, who when the Lord had delivered

livered into his hand a huge hoſt of the *Ethiopians* and *Lubims*, becauſe they relied on him, did afterwards rely on the Kings of *Syria*, and not on the Lord his God; For which he received ſo ſharp a rebuke from the Lord, 2 *Chron.* 16.7,8,9.

9. The ninth Peſtilential ſin, is the ſin of *Diſcontent*, accompanied alſo with a ſpirit of *diſtruſtfulneſs* and unbeleif; When a people will not be content with Gods allowance, but will loath his bleſſings and his proviſions, and fall a luſting after evil things to ſatisfie their inordinate deſires. This was *Iſraels* provoking ſin, *Numb.* 11.4. The multitude that was among them fell a luſting, and they wept and ſaid, *Who ſhall give us fleſh to eat? We remember the fiſh which we did eat in* Egypt *freely, the Cucumbers, and the Melons, and the Leeks, and the Onyons, and the Garlick; but now our ſouls is dried away, there is nothing at all beſides this Manna before our eyes*: Though it was the corn of heaven, and Angels food that they eat, and ſuch as did prefigure Chriſt himſelf, his word and grace, *Joh.* 6.31,32,33. and 1 *Cor.* 10.3. yet now they look upon it, and count it but as a deſpicable thing; and nothing now would ſatisfie them but fleſh, and this to ſatisfie their luſt. And therefore it is ſaid in the 78 Pſalm and the 18th verſe. *They tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their luſt; yea they ſpake againſt God and ſaid, Can God furniſh a table in the Wilderneſs? Behold, he ſmote the rock that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed; Can he give bread alſo? Can he provide fleſh for his people? Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth: So a*

fire

fire was kindled against Jacob, *and anger also came up against* Israel, *&c.* Well, nothing would satisfie their lusts but flesh, and flesh they shall have with a witness, till it come out at their very nostrils, and was loathsom unto them, so they did eat and were filled; for he gave them their own desire: they were not estranged from their lust; but while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, *The wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague*: And the name of that place was called *Kibroth-hattanah* (that is, the graves of lust) because, there they buried the people that lusted.

Hence it was that the Apostle treating of the bountiful dealings of God with the children of *Israel*, said, *That with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things* (saith he) *were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted*, 1 Cor. 10. 5, 6. This is a sore evil, an intestine evil, a sickness indeed, that gnaws and torments the very heart, called therefore the *Plague of Discontent*, which many of the people of God themselves, as well as the men of the world are too too often infected with, when not contenting our selves, I say, with the mercies and blessings which God affords us, we fall a lusting after evil things, as the *Israelites* here after flesh, to satisfie their lusts, loathing the heavenly Manna which God gave them: And our desires oftentimes are so inordinate after them, that like unto *Rachel* in the case of her barrenness (though otherwise blest with many comfortable enjoyments) we are crying

ing out, *Give me children or elſe I die, Gen.*30.1. I cannot live, my life will be a burden unto me if I have not this or that; I muſt have it whatever it coſt me, though I part with half of my eſtate; nay, with *Herod*, it may be to the half of the Kingdom, for his *Herodias* ſake, becauſe ſhe pleaſed him; and to ſatisfie this luſt, *Off muſt go John Baptiſts head*, Mark 6.22,23,24. Or like unto *Haman*, who though he was ſo highly promoted in King *Ahaſuerus* Court, *Yet* (ſaith he) *all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the Jew ſitting at the Kings gate*, Heſt.5.13. *Mordecai* could not bow the knee, nor do him that reverence, as his proud ambitious heart panted after, and this ſowres all other his great advancements and enjoyments, and now nothing will ſatisfie him leſs then his deſtruction, and the total deſtruction of all the Jews, *Heſt.*3.9.

So violent are perſons ſet upon the ſatisfying of their luſts oftentimes, though it be to their own hurt: This was the ſin of the *Iſraelites*, they could not content themſelves that God was their King, and that he ſhould reign over them, but they muſt have a King to reign over them, like unto other Nations; rejecting the Lord and his Government, who himſelf had ſaved them out of all their adverſities and tribulations, 1 *Sam.*8.5,6,7. and chap.10.19. And how great this wickedneſs of theirs was in the ſight of the Lord, the ſignal teſtimonies of his diſpleaſure did evidently declare it, 1 *Sam.*12.17. So is it not juſt with God when a people falls a loathing of the heavenly Manna of Gods Word (and where hath the Goſpel been more powerfully preached, and more obſtinately contemned

temned then in *England?*) that the Lord ſhould ſend a famine in the Land, if not a famine of bread and a thirſt for water, yet a famine of hearing the Words of the Lord, *Amos* 8. 11. O that this was ſeriouſly laid to heart, and fruitfully applyed both by Profeſſors, as by the prophane perſons of this Nation. So dangerous and deſtructive a thing it is to cheriſh a carnal diſſatisfied and diſcontented ſpirit againſt the Lord.

10. A tenth Peſtilential and God-provoking Sin, is the ſin of *Pride* and *Ambition*, and a truſting in an Arme of fleſh, not relying on the mighty power and faithfulneſs of God. This was *Davids* ſin in of numbring the people, which was followed with a ſore Priſtilence among them. See the ſecond of *Samuel* 24. *Chap.* comp. with 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. Satan he provoked *David* to number the people, that he might know how many valiant men there were in *Iſrael*, that could draw the ſword. And queſtionleſs *Davids* heart was lifted up hereby, when *Joab* gave up the ſum of the number of the people unto him, there being in *Iſrael* eight hundred thouſand valiant men that drew the ſword, and the men of *Judah* were five hundred thouſand. And what ſhould move *David* to ſuch a thing but a proud ambitious deſire to know the ſtrength and number of his men of war, accompanied with a diſtruſtfulneſs of the mighty power of God, and his All-ſufficient arme, which had ſo often ſaved and delivered him out of the hands of *Saul*, and from the hand of all his enemies. As in the 18th. *Pſal.* wherein he praiſeth God for his manifold and marvellous deliverances. For this *Davids* heart ſmote him, acknowledging that he had ſinned greatly

greatly in what he had done, and prayeth that the Lord would take away his iniquity, for he had done very fooliſhly. Yet the Lord would ſhew his juſtice, & make all the world to ſee and know, that he will not indulge ſin, no not in his deareſt Servants, and moſt beloved Saints; but if they ſin they muſt expect to ſuffer and ſmart for it. As *Amos* 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities.* And therefore he puts *David* upon his choiſe of three things, whether the Famine, the Sword, or Peſtilence he would make choiſe of, and this did put him into a great ſtreight, but he choſe rather to fall into the hands of God, then into the hands of men, for that the mercies of the Lord are great. So the Lord ſent a *Peſtilence* upon *Iſrael*, from the morning even to the time appointed, and there died of the people from *Dan* even to *Beerſheba*, *Seventy thouſand men.* And when the Angel ſtretched out his hand upon *Jeruſalem* ready to deſtroy it, it is ſaid, the Lord repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the Angel that deſtroyed the people, *It is enough, ſtay now thy hand.* This alſo was *Edoms* ſin, *Jer.* 49. 16, 17, 18. Thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee, & the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock: That holdeſt the height of the hill: though thou ſhouldſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence ſaith the Lord. Alſo *Edom* ſhall be a deſolation, every one that goeth by it ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and ſhall hiſs all at the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the neighbour Cities thereof, ſaith the Lord, *No man ſhall abide there, neither ſhall a Son of Man dwell in it.* This was

King

King *Asa's* sin before mentioned, in the 2 *Chron.* 16. 7, 8, *and* 9. *vers.* so sharply reproved and punished by the Lord. For this was a dreadful wo denounced against the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, Isa. 30. 1, 2, 3. *Wo to the rebellious children* (saith the Lord) *that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may adde sin to sin. That walk to go down into* Egypt (*and have not asked at my mouth*) *to strengthen themselves in the strength of* Pharaoh, *and to trust in the shadow of* Egypt. And mark what follows. *Therefore shall the strength of* Pharaoh *be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of* Egypt *your confusion.* Which caused the Lord to take up that bitter complaint, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. *Be astonished, O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid*: Why? whats the matter? *My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken me the Fountain of Living Water, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water.* All other things to relye upon besides God, will prove but as broken Cisterns. Therefore said *David* at another time, when his faith and confidence was strong in God. *I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. Through thee will we push down our enemies, through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us,* Psal. 44. 5, 6. Yea, we have the Lord himself declaring, that the salvation of his people must proceed from himself, and not from any secondary causes, *Hos.* 1. 7. *But I will have mercy upon the house of* Judah, *and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battel, by horses, nor by horsemen.*

Take

Take we heed then of any preſumptuous relying on our own ſtrength, or of ſtrengthening our ſelves in the ſtrength of any creatures, whether Armies, or Parliaments, or Navies, or any ſinful confederacies or Aſſociations of men whatſoever, *Iſa.* 8. 9. *Curſed is the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arme; and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord,* Jer. 17. 5. But let us ſay with the Church, *Hoſ.* 12. 3. Aſhur *ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods.* As if they had ſaid, We will not put our truſt any more in men, we will confide no more in any humane means, nor ſend abroad for help and confederacies, all beſides thee being vanity, and the relying on it apparent ruine. *Therefore we will truſt in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength. For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty City he layeth it low, he layeth it low even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the duſt. The foot ſhall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the ſteps of the needy,* Iſa. 26. 4, 5, 6. So dangerous and deſtructive a thing it is to have a heart lifted up, putting confidence in an arme of fleſh, and not relying on the Lord our God. For it is he that ſheweth ſtrength with his arme, and that ſcattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts, *Luk.* 1. 51.

11. The eleventh provoking Peſtilential deſtroying Sin, is the ſin of *Apoſtacy, Back-ſliding,* and *Revolting* from God, *Jer.* 2. 18, 19. *And now what haſt thou to do (ſaith the Lord) in the way of* Egypt *to drink the waters of* Sihor? *or what haſt thou to do in the way of* Aſſyria, *to drink the waters of the river?*

ver? Thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee, and thy back-ſliding ſhall reprove thee: Know therefore and ſee that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. So in the 36. verſe. *Why gaddeſt thou about ſo much to change thy way? thou alſo ſhalt be aſhamed of* Egypt. And now behold, how the Lord for this did threaten, that his judgement, even this of the *Peſtilence* ſhould overtake them, *Jer.* 42. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. *We will not dwell in this land* (ſay they) *nor obey the voice of the Lord your God; No, but we will go into the land of* Egypt, *where we ſhall ſee no war, nor hear the ſound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread, and there will we dwell. And now therefore hear the Word of the Lord, ye remnant of* Judah, *thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of* Iſrael; *If ye wholly ſet your faces to enter into* Egypt, *and go to ſojourn there.* What then? *Then it ſhall come to paſs, that the Sword which ye feared ſhall overtake you there in the land of* Egypt, *and the Famine whereof you were afraid ſhall follow cloſe after you there in* Egypt, *and there ye ſhall dye; ſo ſhall it be with all the men that ſet their faces to go into* Egypt *to ſojourn there, they ſhall dye by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the* Peſtilence, *and none of them ſhall remain or eſcape from the evil that I will bring upon them.*

And ſays further, that as his anger and fury had been poured forth upon the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, ſo ſhould his fury be poured forth upon them, when they ſhould enter into *Egypt*, and they ſhall be an execration, and an aſtoniſhment, and a curſe, and a reproach, and ſhould ſee the place (meaning the land of *Judea*) no more. So in the 19. *verſe*,

O ye

O ye remnant of Judah, *go ye not into* Egypt; and now I have this day declared it unto you, but ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, &c. Now therefore know certainly that ye shall dye by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go and to sojourn. So in the 44. *Chap.* of *Jer.* 13. *ver.* *For I will punish them that dwell in the land of* Egypt, *as I have punished* Jerusalem, *by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence.* To which I shall add that in the 14. of *Jer.* 10. and 12. *vers.* *Thus saith the Lord unto the people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet: therefore the Lord doth not accept them, he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. Then said the Lord unto me; Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt-offering, and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the Sword, and by the Famine, and by the Pestilence.* So dreadful and dangerous a thing it is, for a people brought out of *Egyptian* bondage and darkness, to long after the Flesh-pots, the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick of *Egypt* again. *For if any man draw back (saith the Lord) my soul shall have no pleasure in him,* Heb. 10. 38. *And as for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon* Israel, *Psal.* 125. 5.

O that this were well considered by all such who have Apostatized and Revolted from the Lord and his ways, in this sinful and back-sliding generation. Who as the Prophet *Hosea* says, *Are profound to make slaughter, though the Lord is a Rebuker of them*

all, Hoſ. 5. 2. Who once did appear to be forward Aſſertors of the Cauſe of righteouſneſs and truth; but now ſay a Confederacy, with all ſuch as ſay a Confederacy, *Iſa* 8. 12. Who once did ſeem to eſcape the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; but are now again intangled therein and overcome, turning with the Dog to his own vomit again, and with the Sow that was waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire. Let ſuch know, *That their latter end will be worſe with them then the beginning*, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

12. The twelfth Peſtilential and highly provoking Sin, is the ſin of *Rebellion*, and *Obſtinate Diſobedience againſt God and his Commandments*, Levit. 26. 23, 24, 25. And if ye will not be reformed by theſe things (ſaith the Lord) but will walk contrary unto me, then will I alſo walk contrary unto you, and will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins. And I will bring a ſword upon you, that ſhall avenge the quarrel of my *Covenant*; and when ye are gathered together within your Cities, I will ſend the *Peſtilence* among you, and ye ſhall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. So *Deut.* 28. 15, 16, 20, 21. If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve to do all his Commandments, and his Statutes, *&c.* Theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee, and overtake thee; *Curſed ſhalt thou be in the City, and curſed ſhalt thou be in the field*, &c. The Lord ſhall ſend upon thee curſing, vexation, and rebuke in all that thou ſetteſt thy hand for to do until thou be deſtroyed, and until thou periſh quickly. And wherefore?

ſore? Becauſe of the wickedneſs of thy doings whereby thou haſt forſaken me. The Lord ſhall make the Peſtilence cleave unto thee until he hath conſumed thee, and the Lord ſhall ſmite thee with a Conſumption, and with a Feaver, and with an Inflammation, and with an extream Burning, and with the Sword, and with Blaſting, and with Mildew, and they ſhall purſue thee until thou periſh. So in the 58, *and* 59. *verſ.* If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this Law, that are written in this Book, that thou mayſt fear this glorious and fearful name; *The Lord thy God.* Then the Lord will make thy Plagues wonderful, and the Plagues of thy ſeed, even great plagues, and of long continuance; and ſore ſickneſſes, and of long continuance. So *Deut.* 29. 22, 23, 24, 25. The Generations to come when they ſhall ſee the *Plagues* of the Land, and the ſickneſſes which the Lord hath laid upon it; and that the whole Land is Brimſtone, and Salt, and Burning, *&c.* like the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, &c. which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.

Even all Nations ſhall ſay, *Wherefore hath the Lord done this? What meaneth the heat of this great anger?* Then men ſhall ſay, *Becauſe they have forſaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers*, &c. To this agrees that of the Prophet *Jerem.* 29, 17, 18, 19. *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, Behold, I will ſend upon them the Sword, the Famine, and the Peſtilence, and will make them like vile figgs, that cannot be eaten they are ſo vile. And I will perſecute them with the Sword, with the Famine, and with the Peſtilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the Kingdomes of the Earth, to be a Curſe, and an Aſtoniſhment, and a Hiſ-*

sing, and a Reproach among all the Nations, whither I have driven them. And wherefore will the Lord be so severe against them? *Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the Prophets, rising up early and sending them, but ye would not hear, saith the Lord.* So *Ezek.* 6. 11. Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of *Israel*: for they shall fall by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence; He that is far off shall die of the Pestilence, and he that is near shall fall by the Sword, and he that remaineth and is besieged, shall dye by the Famine. Thus will I accomplish, saith the Lord, my fury upon them, *Ezek.* 7. 15. *The Sword is without, and the Pestilence and the Famine within, he that is in the Field shall dye with the Sword, and he that is in the City, Famine and Pestilence shall devour him.* And why? *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness*, v. 11. *The rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.* So *Ezek.* 14. 19, 21. If I send a Pestilence into that Land, and pour out my fury upon it in bloud, to cut from it *Man* and Beast, though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were in it, As I live, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither Son nor Daughter, they shall but deliver their own souls, by their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord God, How much more when I sent my four sore Judgements upon *Jerusalem*, the Sword, and the Famine, and the noysome Beast, and the Pestilence, *to cut off from it Man and Beast?* And when will the Lord execute this great severity, and be so inexorable? the 13. *vers.* declares it, *When the land sinneth against me, saith the Lord, by trespassing grievously.*

I shall

I shall conclude with that in the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 2. ver. 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of* Judah, *and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof: Because they have despised the law of the Lord, and have not kept his Commandements*, &c. And what follows? *I will send a fire upon* Judah, *and it shall devour the Palaces of* Jerusalem. So *Amos* 4. 10. &c. I have sent among you the Pestilence after the manner of *Egypt*, your young men have I slain with the Sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stinck of your Camps to come up into your Nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. So incorrigible hard-hearted and un-reformed were they under all the sore Judgements, that the Lord had inflicted upon them: Yet before he will make an utter destruction, he invites them once again to repentance. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O* Israel, *and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God O* Israel.

Thus you see what a high provoking sin it is to rebel against God, and his Commandments. As *Samuel* said to *Saul*, when he disobeyed the Word of the Lord. *Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and Stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. And if God was so severe to punish the transgressions of the law, with what severity will Christ proceed against the willful contemners, and disobeyers of his Gospel? according to that of the 2d. of the *Heb.* 2, *and* 3. *vers. If every transgression and disobedience, received a just recompence of reward*, that is, of punishments inflicted on them: *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* that is, the Gospel, which is called a Ministry of the

ſpirit and of life, whereas the law is a killing letter, or the miniſtration of death and condemnation, 2 *Cor.* 3,6,7,9. *And the wrath of God cometh upon the children of* (Goſpel) *diſobedience*, Epheſ. 5. 6.

13. The thirteenth peſtilential and highly provoking ſin, is the ſin of *Inſurrection and riſing up againſt the Lords lawful Governours and Government, whether Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, in Church or Commonwealth.* This was the ſin of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abyram* and their copartners, mentioned in *Num.* 16. God had choſen *Moſes* and *Aaron* to be the cheif Leaders and Governors of his people, and placed the Government in their hands, both as to the Civil and Religious adminiſtration thereof; *Korah* and his companions gather themſelves together againſt them, and told them they took too much upon them, ſeeing all the Congregation was holy, every one of them, and that the Lord was among them, wherefore then ſhould they lift up themſelves above the Congregation of the Lord? But ſee how highly incenſing and provoking was this unto the Lord; *Separate your ſelves* (ſaith he to *Moſes* and *Aaron*) *from among the congregation, that I may conſume them in a moment*; and now the Lord he will ſhew who are his, and who are holy, and a ſtrange work will he do; theſe men muſt not dye the common death of all men, nor be viſited after the viſitation of all men, but a new thing will the Lord make, The earth muſt open her mouth and ſwallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they muſt go down quick into the pit; and ſo they did, and the earth cloſed upon them,

and

and they perished from among the Congregation.

Nor did the punishment of this Insurrection end here, but the Lord causes a grievous Plague to break in upon the Congregation. *And* Moses *said to* Aaron, in the 46. verse, *Take a censer and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incense, and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an attonement for them*; and why all this haste? *For there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun: And* Aaron *did so, and stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was staied. Now they that died in the plague, were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died in the matter of* Corah; So highly displeasing is it unto the Lord, for persons to oppose his lawful Authority and Government which he hath put into the hands of his faithful Ministers and Servants. Under which consideration undoubtedly must those Scriptures be comprehended that enjoyn subjection and obedience, whether to the Lords Civil or Ecclesiastical Rulers and Governors, *Rom.*13.1. *Tit.*3.1. 1 *Pet.*2.13,14,15. 1 *Thess.*5.12,13. *Heb.*13.7,17. O that this were seriously and timously considered and laid to heart, by all such who flye in the face of Christ, and carry themselves contemptuously against his lawful Governours and Government which he hath set in his Churches, I mean the Churches of Christ, making unjustifiable and dishonorable rents, schisms and divisions in the body whereof they are members, which should be as the seamless coat of Christ, woven from top throughout, *Joh.*19.23.

Of such who despise the Lords Government or

Dominion, I may ſay without wronging or injuring of them, as *Peter* of ſome ſcandalous backſliding Profeſſors in his time, who were ſpots and blemiſhes in their feaſts of Charity; *Preſumptuous are they and ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of Dignities*, 2 Pet. 2. 10, 13. *And while they promiſe themſelves liberty, they themſelves are the ſervants of corruption.* verſ. 19. *They deſpiſe Dominion*; The word it ſeems ſignifieth, a removing of a thing from its place, with ſome ſcorn and indignation: They would remove the Lords Governors or Rulers over them, with ſcorn and indignation; And whereas they are ſaid *to deſpiſe dominion*, that is more then to deſpiſe their Rulers; for they deſpiſe not only the Lords Governors, but the Government it ſelf. And *to ſpeak evil of Dignities*, or *to reproach Dignities*, is in the Original it ſeems to *blaſpheme Glories*, to ſpeak *reproachfully of Dominions* which are placed in glory amongſt men, or which are ſet over them by the Lord, in eminency, power, honour and authority. Hence it is that lawful Magiſtrates ruling in the fear of the Lord, are ſaid to be *Gods*, *Pſal.* 82. 6. And the Lords Miniſters and Meſſengers of Churches, are ſaid to be the *Glory of Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. And *as ſtars in his right hand are the Angels of the ſeven Churches*, *Rev.* 1. 20. All holding forth that Glory and Dignity which the Lord hath conferred upon them. And for any perſons to riſe up, as *Korah* and his complices did againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, though it be in a preſumption of their own holineſs, *Numb.* 16. 3. Such are like to periſh in the gainſaying of *Core*, as *Jude* expreſſeth, verſ. 11. of his Epiſtle. It being very obſervable, how the Pſalmiſt does expreſs this act of *Korah*'s Inſurrection, or riſing up againſt *Moſes* and

and *Aaron*, to be no leſs then an envying of them; *They envied* Moſes *alſo in the camp, and* Aaron *the Saint of the Lord. The earth opened and ſwallowed up* Dathan, *and covered the company of* Abiram. *And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the wicked*, Pſa. 106. 16, 17, 18. That example alſo of *Miriam* and *Aarons* ſpeaking againſt *Moſes* is not to paſs without its due obſervation neither, *Numb.* 12. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10. The Lord giving that teſtimony of *Moſes* his ſervant, that he was faithful in all his houſe; *Wherefore then* (ſaith he) *were ye not afraid to ſpeak againſt my ſervant* Moſes? *And the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt them, and Miriam became leprous, as white as ſnow.* Let ſuch therefore who are guilty in this matter, conſider how provoking a ſin this is unto the Lord, and whether they may not have a hand in pulling down this ſore viſitation among us.

14. A Fourteenth Peſtilential, and highly provoking ſin, is the ſin of *Prophanation of Gods holy things*, and *an Over-curious, preſumptuous ſpeculation, and prying unwarrantably into the Secrets of God.* This was the ſin of the men of *Aſhdod*, for which the hand of the Lord was ſo heavy upon them, viſiting them with greivous plagues, when they took the *Ark* and *brought it into the houſe of Dagon* (the Temple of their Idol-god) and ſet it by *Dagon*; ſo ſore was the hand of God on them that he ſmote them with Emrods, and deſtroyed them, and ſuch a deadly deſtruction there was throughout all the City, inſomuch that the cry of the City went up to heaven, 1 *Sam.* 5. The Ark was a Cheſt or Coffer, which was made of Shittim or Cedar wood, overlaid roundabout with gold, whoſe cover, called *the Mercy-ſeat* was alſo of pure gold, on which was two glorious Cherubs

rubs of gold, from whence God gave his oracle, *Numb.*7.89. Theſe Cherubims were placed at the the two ends of the *Mercy-ſeat.* and they ſpread out their wings on high, which covered over the Mercy-ſeat, with their face, one to another, *Exod.* 37.1,2,6,7,8,9. In this were the two Tables of the Law or Teſtimony put, written with the finger of God, *Exod.*25.16,21. *Deut.*10.3,4,10. Between the Cherubims God was ſaid to ſit, *Pſal.* 80.2. *There will I meet with thee* (ſaith the Lord) *and will commune with thee from above the Mercy-ſeat, between the two cherubims, which are upon the Ark of the Teſtimony*, verſe 22. Now this Mercy-ſeat on which God did thus ſit between the wings of the Cherubims was a figure of Chriſt, by whom our tranſgreſſions of the law are forgiven and covered, *who is the propitiation for our ſins*, 1 *Joh.* 2.2. And therefore called the *Propitiatory*, *Rom.* 3.15. To this glorious ſeat, where Gods preſence with his Church was manifeſted, the Throne of God is anſwerable in the Chriſtian Church, in the preſence of which Throne his people are, and ſerve him day and night in his Temple, *Rev.*7.15,17. 8.3. 21.3,5. Now this Ark being thus a type or figure of Chriſt and of his Church, and of his glorious preſence with the ſame, its no wonder if the Lord ſhall ſo ſeverely puniſh the prophanation of it, when men ſhall ſet it in the Temple of *Dagon.* Surely if the Ark ſtand there *Dagon* muſt fall, yea and it ſhall fall before the Ark of the Lord, which is called the Ark of his ſtrength. *Pſal.* 132.8. And when the Ark ſet forward, then *Moſes* ſaid, *Riſe up Lord, and let thine enemies be ſcattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee.* God cannot endure

to

to have his holy things prophaned, that the abomination of deſolation ſhall ſtand in his holy place; that men ſhall ſet their threſholds by Gods threſholds, and their poſts by Gods poſts, by defiling his holy name with their abominations, *Wherefore* (ſaith the Lord) *I have conſumed them in mine anger*; No ſurely, the place of the ſoles of his feet, where he will dwell in the midſt of the children of *Iſrael* for ever, and his holy name he will not ſuffer to be defiled, but he will beautifie the place of his ſanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious, *Iſa.* 60.13. comp. with *Ezek.* 43. 7,8. Let men take heed then of offering ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commandeth them not, leſt there comes out fire from the Lord and devoureth them; as in the caſe of *Nadab* and *Abihu* the ſons of *Aaron*, who for this cauſe died before the Lord. And what ſaid *Moſes* to *Aaron* thereupon, *This is that that the Lord ſpake ſaying, I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified*, Lev. 10.1,2,3. So likewiſe when men will be preſumptuouſly and unwarrantably prying into the ſecrets of God, ſee how ſeverely the Lord hath puniſhed this evil; as in the caſe of the men of *Beth-ſhemeſh* ſaid, whom the Lord ſorely ſmote, becauſe they looked into the Ark of the Lord, even he ſmote of the people Fifty thouſand and threeſcore and ten men, and the people lamented, becauſe the Lord had ſmitten many of the people with a great ſlaughter. And the men of *Beth-ſhemeth* ſaid, *Who is able to ſtand before the holy Lord God?* 1 Sam. 6.19,20.

So dangerous a thing it is to be over-curiouſly preſumptuous in looking into the *Arcana Dei*, the ſecret

ſecret and hidden things of God, which he hath not revealed. Therefore it was that the Lord had commanded, that *Aaron* and his ſons, even they, and not others, ſhould take down the covering vail, and cover the Ark of the Teſtimony with it. And thus do unto them (ſaith the Lord) that they may live and not die, when they approach unto the moſt holy things, Aaron *and his ſons ſhall go in and appoint them every one to his ſervice and to his burden. But they ſhall not go in to ſee when the holy things are covered, leſt they dye*, Numb. 4. 19, 20. See alſo *Levit.* 8. 35. So exact was the Lord for the keeping of his charge. It is ſad to conſider, how wife ſome men have ſeemed to be above that which is written, calculating perſons, and things, and times for the meridian of their own brain; like thoſe lying Prophets which the Lord ſent not, nor ſpake unto, wherefore he complained that they propheſied unto the people a falſe viſion and divination, even a thing of nought and the deceit of their heart, *Jer.* 14. 14. So in *Ezek.* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. *They have ſeen vanity, and lying divination, and they made others to hope, that they would confirm the word*; See now the ſeverе puniſhment of the Lord againſt ſuch; *Behold, I am againſt you, ſaith the Lord God, and mine hand ſhall be upon the Prophets that ſee vanity, and that divine lies: they ſhall not be in the Aſſembly of my people, neither ſhall they be written in the writing of the houſe of* Iſrael, *neither ſhall they enter into the Land of* Iſrael. But ſetting aſide ſuch groſs lying Prophets, it is ſad to think how many profeſſing the fear and knowledge of God, have been over-curiouſly prying into Gods ſecret counſels, and the hidden purpoſes of his minde, limiting,

and

and prescribing the holy one of *Israel*, advancing, and extolling the idle phantasies, and enthusiasmes of their own brains, more then the declarative mind and will of God, contained in the Scriptures of truth. But whatever may be mens pretensions to high, inward unscriptural revelations of God, let us not be believing every such spirit, but trying the spirits, whether they are of God or no; and for this reason, *Because many false Prophets are gone out into the world*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. And what saith *Peter*, *We have also a more sure word of prophesie* (more sure then the voice, which they heard to come from Heaven, when they were in the Holy Mount) *whereunto ye do well* (saith he) *that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn and the Day-star arise in your hearts*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. Ever remembring that in *Deut.* 29. 29. *That secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever.*

15. The fifteenth and last thing, that I shall briefly speak of as a Pestilential destroying sin, is that of *Adding or Diminishing from the Word of God*; for which the Lord Jesus hath threatned such dreadful plagues and punishments. *For I testifie* (saith he) *unto every man that heareth the words of the Prophesie of this Book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this Prophesie*; What followeth then? *God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.* That man may

may be said to add, that shall mix other things, besides what the Lord Jesus hath revealed by his Angel; He addeth, that adjoyneth a lye: For whatsoever is patched to the Scriptures of mens inventions, that it might be accounted as divinely revealed, or the pure Oracles of God, is a lye. Such are the Papal unwritten traditions, or other writings of men whatsoever, which are made with them of like Authority with the written word of God, and which added to the Scriptures are lies. So he takes away, that not onely derogates from the Divine Authority of Gods book; but he also, that any ways changeth, or maliciously perverteth, or contradicteth any thing therein written. Christ will have the integrity, sincerity, and sacred Authority of this Prophesie to be faithfully preserved in the Churches, and that the contemners, falsifiers, and corrupters thereof, be no way suffered under the pain of *Anathema*, or dreadful curse. For if falsifyers of Coin are lyable unto the civil curse of the law: much more shall the *Anathema* of eternal damnation be inflicted upon the corrupters of the Scriptures, which are the words of God. *These with the Beast, and the false Prophet, shall the Lord cast into the Lake of fire burning with brimstone*, Rev. 19. 20. This is a dreadful sin, drawing down the Lords severest plagues and punishments. Therefore take we heed that we add not unto the word which God commands us, nor diminish ought from it, but that we keep the Commandments of the Lord our God which he commandeth us, *Deut.* 4. 2, And mark well the reason that *Solomon* giveth: *Every word of God* (saith he) *is pure, he is a shield to them that put their trust in him.* And consider what follows.

Add

Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a lier, Prov. 30. 5, 6.

Having now ſpoken of the ſeveral Sins which ſo highly provoke the Lord to pour down his ſore Judgements, even this of the *Plague* or *Peſtilence* among a people. I ſhall now come to ſpeak of ſome ſpecial ſpiritual Remedies, which may be fitly applied, and made uſe of, as Soveraign Antidotes and Preſervatives to prevent the further ſpreading of this peſtilential contagious diſeaſe among us.

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1. THe firſt ſpiritual Receipt, that I ſhall then preſcribe unto thee, who ever thou art that getteſt in thy hand, and readeſt this little tract,

Conſider ſeriouſly, and let thy thoughrs dwell long upon thoſe Sins, that I have inſiſted on, as ſuch which are the procuring Cauſe of this ſo ſore a viſitation from the Lord; and entring into a diligent ſcrutiny, and examination of thine own heart and ways: Conſider how far thou haſt been, or art a partaker of thoſe ſins, which have ſo highly provoked the Lord to ſend down this National Judgement of the Plague and Peſtilence among us. For if we ſtand guilty of the ſame Sins, how then ſhall we think to eſcape the like puniſhment? This was the way and courſe the Apoſtle took, when ſpeaking of Gods diſpleaſure againſt the Iſraelites, whereby many of them were overthrown in the Wilderneſs; how does he bring it home by way of ſpecial application. *Now theſe things* (ſaith he) *were our Examples, to the intent we ſhould not luſt after evil things as they alſo luſted. Neither be ye Idolaters*,

taters, as were some of them, &c. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one Day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents. Neither murmure ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer. Now all things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5, 6, *to the* 11, *and* 12. *ver.* So say I as from the Lord. As to the first Pestilentiall sin of *Oppression*. Did the Lord plague *Pharaoh*, and his Land, with sore and dreadful plagues, even this of the destroying Pestilence, for his cruel oppressions, which he exercised over the bodies and consciences of Gods people; Take heed then that thou art not found an Oppressor of the true worshippers of Jesus, the spiritual Israel of God: Take heed of exalting thy self against God, in seeking still to hold the spiritual Seed under *Egyptian* captivity and bondage. See, that thou lets them go to sacrifice to the Lord God, as he has commanded them. Take heed of ruling over them with rigour, and making their lives bitter with hard bondage. Take heed ye rich men, that ye do not oppress the poor. Know that the Lord surely looks upon the afflictions of his people, and hears their cry by reason of their Task-masters, and will come down to deliver them, *Exod.* 3. 7, 8.

So to those that are the Bishops, Elders, and Overseers, the Spiritual Rulers, and Leaders of the flocks of Christ. Take heed that ye be not Lords over Gods heritage, but examples to the flocks: See that ye feed the flocks of God, taking the

the overſight of them, *not by conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind,* 1 *Pet.* 5. 2,3. Take heed that ye do not exerciſe a dominion over their faith, but are helpers of their joy, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. Take heed that ye do not eat the fat, and cloath you with the wool, and kill them that are fed: Take heed that with force and cruelty, ye rule not over them. So then to all that oppreſs, whether in one kind or another, ſee that ye undo heavy burdens, and let the oppreſſed go free, and break every yoke; elſe, ſurely the Lord will viſit for theſe things, and his ſoul will be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this.

2. So for the Sin of *Perſecution*, and *Hatred* againſt God, and his people. Hath the Lord ordained the Arrows of his Indignation, even the Inſtruments of Death againſt the Perſecutors? and will he ſtrike them into the hearts of his Enemies? O, then take heed, that thou art not found a hater of God, and a Perſecutor of the people of God, leſt the Arrow of the deſtroying Peſtilence, that flyeth at noon day, do light upon thee, and the Angel of the Lord perſecute thee.

3. So for the Sin of *Murder* and *Bloodſhed*. Hath the Lord threatned his ſore plagues againſt the Deſtroyers of his heritage? and will he avenge the blood of his Servants, at the great whore of *Babylons* hands? and is there a time when the Lord will make inquiſition for blood? Then beware that thou haſt not a hand in killing, and deſtroying the Saints of the moſt high God. And take heed, that thou partake not of *Babylons* ſins, leſt thou receive of her plagues. *For the Lord will avenge the blood of his Servants, and will render vengeance to his Ad-*

versaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people, Deut. 32. 43.

4. So for the fourth Pestilential and highly provoking Sin of *Idolatry*. Was the anger of the Lord so kindled against *Israel*, when *Israel* had joyned himself to *Baal-peor*, that no less then four and twenty thousand died in the plague. And did the Lord plague the people, because of the Calf they had made? Then beware that ye be not Idolaters as were some of them, and provoke the Lord to anger with your inventions. *For surely the Lord our God is a jealous God, his glory he will not give to another, neither his praise to Graven Images*, Isa 42.8.

5. So for the Sin of *Covetousness*, and a greedy desire after gain. Is it a sin so abhorring unto the Lord? does the wrath of the Lord come upon the Children of disobedience, because of it? Has the Lord denounced so many woes against it? and threatned to smite with his plagues, and punishments for it? O then beware of Covetousness, and being greedy of gain, *lest thou be a troubler of thine house*, Prov. 15. 27.

6. So for the Sin of *Cursing*, and *Swearing*, and *False-swearing*. Is it, that because of Swearing the Land mourns, and the Lord had a *Controversie* with the Land, because of it? And that the Curser shall be cloathed with his Cursing, as with a Garment? and it shall come into his bowels like water, and the Curse shall enter into the house of the False-swearer? O then beware that thou art not found in these sins, lest these dreadful Judgments of God fall upon thee.

7. So for the seventh Pestilential destroying Sin, namely, the sin of *Adultery*, *Fornication*, and such like

like corporeal filthineſs and uncleanneſs. Did the Lord ſo ſeverely puniſh the ſin of *Zimbri* and *Cosby* who were taken in the act of uncleanneſs, that no leſs then twenty four thouſand died in the plague? And did the Lord plague *Pharaoh* and his houſe with great plagues, becauſe of *Sarai*, *Abrams* wife? Then beware thou beaſtly Adulterer, thou filthy Fornicator, and unclean Liver, leſt the like ſeverity of God take hold of thee. *Even as* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and the Cities about them, in like manner, giving themſelves over to Fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jud. 7.

8. So for the Sin of *Infidelity*, *Diſtruſt* and *Murmuring* againſt God, the eighth provoking Peſtilential ſin. Did thoſe men that brought up an evil report upon the good Land (diſtruſting God for all the Signs that he had ſhewed among them) dye by the plague before the Lord? And did the Carcaſſes of thoſe who murmured againſt the Lord fall in the Wilderneſs, ſo that that they could not ſee the promiſed Land? O then take heed how thou cheriſh a murmuring diſtruſting, and unbeleiving heart againſt God. Take heed of raiſing up an evil report upon the good land, thereby weakening the hands, and diſcouraging the hearts of thoſe, who would be found walking in the beautiful paths of the Lord, and be faithful in their generation.

9. So for the Sin of *Diſcontent*, loathing Gods bleſſings, and his proviſions, and luſting after evil things, to ſatisfie their inordinate deſires, the ninth provoking Peſtilential ſin. Did the Lord ſmite the people with a very great *Plague*, for this

very evil? Then take we heed that we lust not after evil things, as they also lusted.

10. So for the Sin of *Pride*, *Ambition*, and *Vain-glory*, trusting in an arm of flesh, and not relying on the mighty power and faithfulness of God. Did the Lord for this sin of *David*, send a Pestilence among the Children of *Israel*, so that there dyed of the people Seventy thousand men? O then take we heed of a proud, vain-glorious spirit, and that we trust not in an arm of flesh.

11. So for the Sin of *Apostacy*, *Back-sliding*, and *Revolting* from God. Did the Lord often threaten that for this sin he would consume them by the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence? O then take we heed that we do not Apostatize, and Back-slide in our spirits from the Lord.

12. So for the Sin of *Rebellion*, and *Obstinate Disobedience*, against God and his Commandments. Did the Lord for this sin threaten, that he would send the Pestilence among them, and make it cleave unto them, until he had consumed them? O then beware, that thou sin not against God, and his Commands, with an Obstinate, Rebellious, and disobedient heart.

13. So for the Sin of *Insurrection*, and rising up against the Lords lawful Governours and Government. Did the Lord so severely deal with *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, and their Complices, and Co-partners for this evil; not visiting them after the common visitation of men, causing also the *Plague* to break in among them, so that there died thereof, Fourteen thousand and seven hundred? O then take we heed of this so highly provoking Pestilential sin.

14. So

14. So for the Sin of *Prophanation of Gods holy things*, and an Over-curious, Presumptuous speculation, and prying unwarrantably into the secrets of God. Was the hand of the Lord so heavy upon the men of *Ashdod*, and also upon the men of *Beth-shemish* for this sin, so that he smote them with a deadly destruction, even of the people, Fifty thousand and threescore and ten? O then see that we are not guilty of this so highly provoking Pestilential sin.

15 So for the last Pestilential destroying Sin of *Adding* or *Diminishing* from the word of God, for which the Lord hath threatned such dreadful plagues and punishments. O take thou heed of this so highly provoking sin, lest the Lord add unto thee his plagues, and take away thy part out of the Book of Life.

Having now seriously considered, what those sins are, that so highly provoked the Lord to send down this sore visitation, of the Plague or Pestilence among a people: see I cry, that thou enter then into a diligent search, and examination of thine own heart and ways to find out the sin or sins, which thy Conscience shall tell thee thou standest guilty of before the Lord: Whether it be the sin of *Oppression*, *Persecution*, *Murder*, *Idolatry*, *Adultery*, *Covetousness*, *Cursing* or *Swearing*, *Infidelity*, *Discontent*, *Pride*, *Apostacy*, *Disobedience*, or any other of the forementioned provoking evils. And see that thou art very exact, and not slight, and superficial, in this manner of self-examination. This is the exhortation of the Lord, by his Prophet *Zephaniah*, Chap. 2. 1, 2. *Gather your selves together, yea, ga-*

ther together, O, Nation not deſired: thus is it rendred in our Tranſlation, but other Traſlations read it thus: *Search your ſelves narrowly, yea ſearch your ſelves narrowly, O people, not worthy to be deſired. Before the Decree bring forth, before the day paſs as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you.* I finde the Hebrew word ſignifies thus much; Firſt, To gather your wits together, that was before diſperſed upon vanity. Secondly, To frame your ſelves to purge away your ſpiritual chaff. Thirdly, To ſearch narrowly, as for a loſt jewel, or hid mine. The true ſence is, Enter into your ſelves; ſearch, try and examine all your ways and doings, that ye may rightly underſtand how heavily and greivouſly God muſt needs be offended with your great and manifold ſins. And mark the reaſon why they ſhould be ſo diligent and induſtrious in this work; *Before the Decree bring forth:* That is, before that doth come to paſs, which is decreed by God againſt you; Gods Decree is then ſaid to bring forth, when it cometh to be executed. As the bringing forth of a woman doth not follow preſently after the conception, but in the appointed due time: So alſo is the Decree of God not brought to light, by the execution of it, until the time determined and appointed by himſelf.

Before the day paſs as the chaff] that is, very ſwiftly, ſuddenly, like chaff, the day is paſſing away, therefore whiles ye have time yet, before the day that runs and wears away ſo faſt, does bring forth the Decree, produce and make appear what God hath decreed againſt you. O Nation undeſirable, ſearch your ſelves, yea ſearch your ſelves very

very narrowly, whiles the heat of the Lords wrath doth not yet come upon you; whiles the day of the Lords wrath doth not yet take hold of you. This is further inculcated and preſt by the Lord in the Propheſie of the Prophet *Haggai*, chap. 1. 5,7. *Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houſes* (that is, in your ſtately and ſumptuous houſes, for pleaſure and delight) *and this houſe lye waſte*, or deſolate, meaning the Lords houſe: *Now therefore, thus ſaith the Lord of of Hoſts, Conſider your ways*; Or which is more agreeable to the Original, *Set your heart upon your ways*: Obſerve and conſider well how it fares with you, by reaſon of your ſins. Had they conſidered, or ſet their hearts aright upon their ways, this might have prevented the execution of Gods judgements mentioned the 9,10, and 11, verſes thereof. For want of this the Lord by the Prophet *Iſaiah* ch. 1. takes up a bitter lamentation and complaint; *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth; for the Lord hath ſpoken: I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me. The Ox knoweth his ower, and the Aſs his maſters ſcrib: but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people* (ſaith he) *doth not conſider.* They were more bruciſh and void of underſtanding then the beaſts or brute creatures. For want of this conſideration it was, *that every one turned to his courſe of ſin, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel*, breaking and running through like a water flood, as the word is properly uſed. And why? *Becauſe no man ſaid What have I done?* And the Lord complaineth further, *That the Sterkin the Heaven knew her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow did obſerve the time of*

their coming, but his people knew not the judgement of the Lord, Jer.8.6,7. This is that consideration which we ought to have of our selves: But what strangers are most men and women to their own hearts? who enters into such a serious thought as to say, *What have I done?*

Seneca reporteth of *Sextius*, how every night before he slept he asked his own heart, *What evil this day hast thou amended? what vice hast thou resisted? in what part art thou bettered?* Surely such a course as this, would prevent the fearless and heedless running into many gross enormities and sins; and so prevent the ruine and destruction of many a poor sinful soul. This course the Church took in the *Lamentations*, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord*, Lam.3.39,40. Fall then in good earnest upon this work of self examination; and think it better to know thine own infirmities, and thy soul-sicknesses and sores, then to know the whole world, and all the wonders thereof; It is one of the best parts of wisdom to know thy self: This will beat down thy pride, and keep the humble, and lead thee to the true knowledge of God; It will cast out and keep out sin, and preserve thee from many temptations; It is the beginning and foundation of grace and repentance, *Lam.* 3.40. And will prevent the severe stroak of Gods judgements, as in that of *Zephany* 2. 1,2. And saith the Apostle, *If we will judge our selves, we shall not be judged of the Lord*, Surely did we but know what the heart of man is, while unregenerate and in its natural estate; what a sink, a sea of

sin

ſin and filthineſs it is; how deceitful above all things and deſperately wicked as *Jeremy* hath it, *Jer.*17.9. what infinite intricate windings and turnings there are in the dark laborinths of mans heart; what a multitude of vain thoughts do lodge within it, *Jer.* 4 14. What ſwarms of luſts and uncleaneſs iſſue out from this corrupt and putrified fountain, *Mat.* 12.34. comp. with chap.15.18,19, verſes. What a deal of ſelf-ſophiſtry and impoſture is wrapt up there, by which millions of ſouls are inwraped in the ſnares and ſhackels of Satan; I ſay did we rightly know, and were not ſtrangers to theſe things, it might put us on with all ſeriouſneſs and readineſs this to weighty and profitable a work.

But O where is the man almoſt, that knows, or ſets himſelf in good earneſt for to know and find out the Plague of his own heart! O what a many of *Plague-ſores*, and *running iſſues* are in the hearts of men and women at this day, and yet they are inſenſible of them. Every one almoſt is ſenſible of the Plague-tokens, or ſores when they ſeize upon the body, and moſt people fear and dread this contagious diſeaſe, becauſe of the loathſomneſs of it, but for the Plague of the Heart, the Soul-ſickneſs and ſore, O where is there any knowledge or diſcerning of it! where is there any ſenſe of the loathſomneſs and infectiouſneſs of it! And yet without this, how can we expect a healing? and the removal of this ſevere ſtroke of the Lord? according to *Solomons* prayer, at the dedication of the Temple, 1 *King.*8.37,38,39. *If there be in the land famine, if there be peſtilence,&c. whatſoever plague, whatſoever ſickneſs there be: what prayer and ſupplication ſoever be made by any man, or by all the people* Iſrael (and mark

mark what follows?) *which ſhall know every man the plague of his own heart, and ſpread forth his hands towards this houſe: Then hear thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whoſe heart thou knoweſt (for thou, even thou onely knoweſt the hearts of the children of men.)* Now this prayer of *Solomon* had its confirmation from the Lord, 1 *King.* 9.3. So that this knowledge of the Plague of the heart, is a neceſſary qualification or ingredient to go along with that prayer, which ſhall be prevailing with the Lord for the removal of the Peſtilence out of the land or Nation wherein it is. But if the men of this generaration are ſtill unacquainted with the plagues or ſores of their own heart, if they be ſtill as vain, as proud, as oppreſſing, as Superſtitious, as Idolatrous, as Adulterous, as Murderous, as Blaſphemous, as Rebellious and Diſobedient againſt the Lord and his commands, as reviling and perſecuting the way of truth and holineſs as ever, can it be expected that the hand of the Lord ſhould be removed, or the fire of his his indignation, which now burns ſo very hot among us, ſhould be quenched?

Set thy ſelf then in good earneſt upon this heart-ſearching work, whoever thou art that would eſcape this ſevere ſtroke of the Lord. And if thou knoweſt not how to deal with thy heart, it is ſo treacherous and vile, put up *Davids* prayer unto the Lord. in *Pſal.*139.23,24. *Search me O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts; And ſee if there be any way of wickedneſs in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting.* If there be any pernicious, hurtful, or oppreſſing way in me; and lead me upon

od the way of eternity, upon that way which may lead me to eternal life. But know, that if thou wilt be careleſs and neglective ſtill of this ſo neceſſary a work, and put the Lord upon it, he will then make a very ſtrict and diligent ſearch, and ſee what will be the ſad event and conſequent of it, *Zeph.*1.12. *And it ſhall come to paſs at that time, that I will ſearch Jeruſalem with candles, and puniſh the men that are ſettled on their lees, that ſay in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.* And what follows? *Therefore their goods ſhall become a booty, and their houſes a deſolation: they ſhall alſo build houſes, but not inhabit them; and they ſhall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof. Then the mighty man ſhall cry bitterly. And God wyll bring diſtreſs upon men, that they ſhall walk as blind men, becauſe they have ſinned againſt the Lord, and their blood ſhall be poured out as duſt, and their fleſh as the dung, and at that time, neither their their ſilver nor their gold ſhall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wreth, but the whole land ſhall be devoured by the fire of his jealouſie: For he ſhall make even a ſpeedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.* And when is this time that the Lord will make this ſtrict and diligent ſearch as with candles? ver.7. declares it, It is in the day of the Lord, when he prepareth a ſacrifice, and ſhall bid his gueſts. And in that day of the Lords ſacrifice, then will he puniſh the Princes, and the Kings children, and all ſuch as are cloathed with ſtrange apparel, that leap on the threſhold, and fill their Maſters houſes with deceit. O *England*, then be exhorted to conſider thy ways, that thou mayſt find out thy hideous provoking abominations before

fore the Lord make a speedy riddance. This is the first spiritual Receit I would prescribe unto thee.

The Second Receit.

Having made this diligent search into thine own heart, and found out thy soul-pestilent sores, then the next spiritual Receit I shall prescribe unto thee, *Is a good draught of a sound and sincere Repentance:* Which if sound and sincere will operate these four things in thee;

First, A kindly mourning in secret before the Lord, 1. For thine own iniquities. 2. For the sins and abominations of the times.

Secondly, It will breed a hatred and abhorrency in thy heart against those evils, together, with an humble confession and acknowledgement of them.

Thirdly, A willing forsaking, and renunciation of them.

Fourthly, A returning unto the Lord with all thy heart. Surely as to this Receit, we may write a *Probatum est*, its a tried Receit, a sure Remedy, a soveraign Plaister for this running sore. *Repent and turn your selves from all your trangressions (saith the Lord) so iniquity shall not be your ruine*, Ezek. 18.30. So in *v.* 32. *Turn your selves, and live ye; for why will ye die O house of* Israel? But more particularly to the several branches of Repentance as they are laid down.

First, then see, that the true sense of thy sin does work thy heart to a kindly mourning and sorrowing for the same in secret before the Lord. This sorrow and contrition for sin, will I say, evidence the soundness and sincerity of thy Repentance, when thou canst mourn before the Lord, not only

onely in reſpect of the danger which thou haſt incurred by reaſon of thy ſins, to wit, the curſes of this life, temporal death, and eternal plagues and torments in another world, but alſo that thou haſt ſo unkindly grieved and provoked ſo good a God, ſo compaſſionate a Father, ſo gracious a Redeemer, ſo bleſſed a Sanctifier, and incurred the loſs of ſo great a God, even the favour of ſo good and gracious a God, that taketh no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, *Ezek.* 33.11. This is that godly ſorrow, that the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of, 2 *Cor.* 7.10,11. that worketh repentance to ſalvation, not to be repented of; the notable effects whereof are there alſo demonſtrated and declared; which will be of ſuch ſingular efficacy and force to quench the fire of the Lords indignation and wrath, now broken out among us. In the ſeventh of *Ezekiel*, the Lord threatning the final deſolation of *Iſrael*, telling her that her end was come, and that he would judge her according to her ways, and recompence upon her all her abominations; *That the Sword was without, and the Peſtilence and Famine within*; and that he that was in the field, ſhould die with the ſword; and that he that was in the City, Famine and Peſtilence ſhould devour him. In verſe 16. he tells us *That they that eſcape of them* (meaning thoſe that ſhould eſcape the common calamity of the Sword, Peſtilence and Famine) *they ſhall be on the mountains like Doves of the valleys, all of them mourning every one for his iniquity*: that is, for his own iniquity ſhall every one mourn as Doves of the valleys. The word ſignifieth a making a ſtir by ſighing, whining and howling.

So

So *Hezekiah* in the time of his ſickneſs, tells us, *That he did mourn as a Dove*, Iſa. 38. 14. Such will be the gratious temper and diſpoſition of ſoul of the Lords eſcaped ones: They ſhall mourn every one for his own iniquity, as Doves in the Valleys, in their ſecret retirements with the Lord; the ſence and remembrance of their ſins, in diſhonouring and grieving ſo good and gratius a God, will make them to ſob and ſigh, and even to howl before the Lord. So did *Ephraim*, when he repented, and turned unto the Lord. *I have ſurely heard Ephraim* (ſaith the Lord) *bemoaning himſelf*, Jer. 31. 18. In this ſpirit and temper will the Lords eſcaped remnant be found in.

So in *Iſraels* reſtauration, when the Lord ſhall gather them from the Coaſts of the Earth, in what ſpirit ſhall they then be found? *They ſhall come with weeping* (ſaith the Lord) *and with ſupplications will I lead them*, as in the 9th. *verſ.* of the ſame *Chap.* with weeping for their ſins, and with ſupplications or petitions unto the Lord for mercy and pardon. And ſuitable to this, is that in the 3d. of *Zephan.* 18. *I will gather them that are ſorrowful* (ſaith the Lord) *for the ſolemn aſſembly, to whom the reproach of it was a burden.*

Thoſe that are ſad and ſorrowful, becauſe they are obſtructed and hindered from meeting in the Temple of God, in the Aſſemblies of his Saints, for the ſolemn worſhip and ſervice of God; when they muſt converſe with and among ſuch ſcoffing Companions, which make but a mock and deriſion of God and his Word. In this gratious temper and frame of ſpirit was *David* in, when he could not perform the fervent deſire he had to

ſerve

ſerve God among the faithful. How bitterly does he bemoan his being deprived of the comfort of the publick worſhip of God, during his exile, and the blaſphemies of his enemies, which cauſed his ſpirit even to be overwhelmed? *As the Hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God. My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God: when ſhall I come and appear before God.* Meaning in the Houſe of the Lord, the Tabernacle where the ſolemn worſhip of God was celebrated, and the Ark of the Covenant was, where God dwelled, 2 *Sam.* 6. 2. or where the Lord gave viſible ſigns of his preſence. And mark what follows? *My tears* (ſaith he) *have been my meat day and night, while they continually ſay unto me, Where is thy God?* His tears were as his bread, he fed and fillid himſelf with tears, as if they were his onely food and ſuſtenance, according to that in the 80. *Pſal.* 5. *Thou feedeſt them with the bread of tears, and giveſt them tears to drink in great meaſure.* Meaning his own people oftentimes, who are at his very foot, praying and ſupplicating at the throne of grace.

And ſuch a frame of ſpirit ſhall be found alſo in them, as ſhall ask the way to *Zion*, with their faces thitherward; *They ſhall be going and weeping*, and in this ſpirit of mourning they ſhall go and ſeek the Lord their God. All which doth evidently ſhews forth, what will be the temper and ſpirit of all right-repenting ſouls, and what a frame of ſpirit the Lord expects his people to be found in, when his hand is lifted up, even in this time, when he ſends the deſtroying Peſtilence among us.

Now

Now consider in what frame of spirit art thou before the Lord this day; Hast thou found thy heart broken as it were into shivers for thy sins? Has the sight of thy sins made thee to sigh for thy sins, and to mourn kindly before the Lord for thine iniquities? Hast thou ever shed a tear before the Lord for thy secret sins? or thy more open and notorious abominations? Surely, if in such a day as this, when the Arrows of the Lords Indignation are flying abroad, if thou shalt be found in a Carnal, Light, Frothly, Frolick, Voluptuous, Vain-spirit; a lover of thy pleasures more then a lover of God, putting far away from thee the evil day, and causing the seat of violence to come near; like those the Prophet *Amos* complains of, *Who were at ease in* Sion, *and trusted in the Mountain of* Samaria, *That lay upon Beds of Ivory, and stretcht themselves upon their Couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall, That did chaunt to the sound of the viol; and invent to themselves instruments of Musick:* like *David, That drank wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the chief ointment, but were not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph. I say, if in such a day as this, under such a severe and sore visitation as this, thou shalt be found in such a spirit and temper as this, sad and deplorable will thy condition be.

For mark what the Lord threatned those carnal, fleshly, sensual rejoycing ones. *Therefore now shall they go captive, with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed,* Amos 6. 1. *to the* 8. *vers.* So dangerous and highly provoking a sin, when the present dispensations of God, together with thine

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own perſonal evils, do call for a mournful frame of ſpirit, that then thou ſhouldſt be found in a ſpirit of carnal merriment and rejoycing. As the Lord complained by the Prophet *Iſa. Chap.* 22. 12. *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping and mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth; and behold joy, and gladneſs, ſlaying Oxen, and killing Sheep; eating fleſh, and drinking wine: Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye.*

This they ſpake in a ſcoffing manner, as if they had ſaid, our Prophet tells us, that we ſhall ſoon be deſtroyed, and ſlain, or carried into captivity; let us then be jovial and merry, as long as we may. But mark, how hainouſly did the Lord take it at their hands. *And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hoſts, Surely this iniquity ſhall not be purged from you, till ye dye, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Meaning that it ſhould never be forgiven unto them, unleſs they did ceaſe from ſinning. For ſo the word *till*, or untill, in Scripture phraſe does uſually hold forth, *Gen.* 28. 15. 2 *Sam.* 6. 23. *Matth.* 1. 25.

I ſhall add hereunto that in the Prophet *Joel Chap.* 2d. where the Prophet ſetting forth the terribleneſs of Gods approaching Judgements, in the 12th. *verſ.* he exhorteth them to this repenting, and relenting frame of ſpirit, as the only means to pacifie the Lords wrath and indignation, from breaking out againſt them, or for the removal of it. *Therefore alſo now, ſaith the Lord, Turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with faſting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord*

your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. So in the 15. *vers. Blow the Trumpet in Sion, sanctifie a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctifie the Congregation,* &c. *Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach.* And mark what follows, *Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.*

This was that spirit also that was found in the people of *Nineveh*, when destruction was threatned upon *Jonahs* preaching, *Jonah* 3. 5, 6, 7, 8. It is said, they believed God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least, yea, the King himself arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes; and caused it to be proclaimed, that man and beast should be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands: and (saith he) who can tell, if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

See what signal demonstrations were there here, of the inward sorrow and compunction of their hearts. O how will this Example of *Nineveh* repenting and sorrowing for their sins, rise up in judgement against the men of this generation! *Luk.* 11, 32. Where is the covering of sackcloth to be seen? Any

Any outward demonſtrations of a relenting ſpirit to be diſcerned? Where can we ſee the mournful ſoul that is deeply afflicted for its ſins, under this ſore viſitation of the Lord? Are not men and women as proud, and vain, and carnal, and jovial now as before? Is there any crying mightily unto God? Any turning from their evil way, or from the violence that is in their hands? Do we ſee any looſing of the bands of wickedneſs? undoing the heavy burdens? the letting the oppreſſed go free? and the breaking of every yoke? And where are any bowels of compaſſions drawn out toward the poor and needy? but in vain are all faſtings, and formal devotions, if theſe things are neglected, which are eſſential as to that acceptable faſt which God hath choſen, *Iſa.* 58. 6, 7. See then that ye be true mourners in *Sion*, and let the ſence of thine iniquities work in thee a true contrition, and brokenneſs of heart. *For the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit*, Pſal. 38. 18. This is the heart that he will heal, *Pſal.* 147. 3. The heart that he will bind up, *Iſa.* 61. 1. That Evangelical ſacrifice which he will not deſpiſe, *Pſal.* 51. 17.

Now to get thy heart melted into this mournful frame. Take theſe helps.

1. Be looking up unto Chriſt, whom by thy ſins thou haſt peirced, *Zach.* 12. 10.

2. Apply the New Covenant-promiſes, for the taking away of the ſtony heart out of thy fleſh, and the Lords giving of thee an heart of fleſh, *Ezek.* 11. 19. *and* 36. 26.

3. Get a ſence of the unſpeakable miſery thou art lyable unto by reaſon of thy ſins, *Rom.* 6. 23.

whether it be Pride, Oppreſſion, Idolatry, Adultery, Apoſtacy, Curſing, and Swearing, or ſuch other of thoſe peſtilential ſins before mentioned; or whether they be lies, railings, ſcoffings at Gods people, rotten ſpeeches, bedlam paſſions, goods ill-gotten, time ill-ſpent, prophanation of the Lords-day.

4. Conſider alſo, that thy heart hath been the Fountain, or rather the Sinck, from whence hath iſſued many foul ſtreams, where all ill hath been forged, all evil words, and wicked thoughts ingendred, then by the rule of proportion let thy heart be a fountain of ſorrow for ſin.

5. Conſider the heart of Chriſt, he had not taken a heart of fleſh, but for ſin; which for thy ſake was filled with that unexpreſſible ſorrow and greif, that if all the godly ſorrow of all the righteous ſouls, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, in heaven and in earth, dead or alive, were collected into one heart, they could not countervail the depth of his anguiſh. And ſhall his bleſſed ſoul fall aſunder in his bleſſed breaſt, aſſaulted with all the wrath of God, and the moſt dreadful torments of Hell? ſhall his ſoul be like a ſcorched hearth, and ſo preſſed with the flames of Gods revenging wrath, which wrung from him thoſe bloody drops, and ruful crys. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And ſhall thy heart be as a ſtone within thy breaſt, and never be moved? Oh, prodigious hardneſs, and worſe then heatheniſh ingratitude!

6. Conſider if thy heart be not wounded here in this world, in ſome meaſure truly, it ſhall hereafter be filled with ſuch endleſs horrour, that

it

it would grieve and break ten thouſand hearts to imagine or think of it. Is it not better then, to mourn a little here in this life for ſin, then to have our hearts inlarged to endure to all eternity, the extremity of the wrath of God, in the unexpreſſible horrour of hell? Is any man ſo ſenſleſs, to think he ſhall go to heaven in a bed of down, and never be touched for his ſins? When *Hezekiah*, a man of a perfect heart, complained and chattered like a Crane, *Iſa.* 38. 14. When *David* a man after Gods own heart, roared all the day long, *Pſal.* 32. 3. When *Job* a perfect and a juſt man, complained that the Arrows of the Almighty were within him, and that the venome thereof did drink up his ſpirit, *Job* 6. 4. Nay when Chriſt himſelf, that holy and juſt one, that pure and immaculate Lamb, did ſo cry out, in the agony and bitterneſs of his ſpirit.

7. Conſider again, that if thou getſt this broken heart into thy breaſt, thou ſhalt bring down the glorious Majeſty of Heaven, God Almighty with his Chair of State to ſit in thy ſoul. For he hath a twofold habitation, to wit, heaven, and the humble heart, *Iſa.* 57. 15.

8. Add hereunto the practiſe of the Saints of God. They poured out tears as men do water out of Buckets, 1 *Sam.* 7. 6. *Mary Magdalen* waſhed Chriſts feet with her tears, *Luk.* 7. 14. The Publican ſtrook on his breaſt, with a ſorrowful acknowledgment of his ſins, *Luk.* 18. 13. And ſurely, if thy hands and eyes, and tongue and heart, have been inſtruments of Gods diſhonour; then by the Rule of proportion, thou ſhouldſt have the works of thy hands, inſtrumental demonſtrations of re-

Pentance. Thine eyes fountains of tears, and thy tongue uttering, and thy heart suffering greif. And if for outward losses and crosses, thou canst weep tears, as *David* for his Son *Absalom*? and with what wringing of hands, tearing of hair, bitter crying, do many express the inward, and intollerable sorrow, and greif of their hearts? Then certainly the loss of Christ, and of the favour of God, which is infinitely better then Husband, Wife, Child, or any the most delireable thing in the world, how should this break thy heart, and draw tears from thy soul?

Thus having got thy heart melted into this mournful frame, out of a deep sence, and apprehension of thine own sins. Then,

Secondly, Thou wilt come to mourn kindly, upon the accompt of the common sins, and abominations of the times. As *David* in the 119. *Psalm.* 136. *vers. Rivers of waters* (saith he) *run down mine eyes*, and why? *because, they keep not thy law.* Or as others read it. Mine eyes gush out with rivers of waters, I weep and shed abundance of tears, even for the wickeds sake whom I pity; and especially, for the law of God, which greiveth me to the heart to see violated and broken. So the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Oh that my head* (saith he) *were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the Daughter of my people. O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them.* Why? what is the matter good *Jeremy* of this so sad and mournful a wish? and that thou wouldst leave thy people, and go from them? Why? there is cause and reason enough,

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might he say. *They be all Adulterers, an Assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me,* saith the Lord, *Jer.* 9. 1, 2, 3. So deeply was the soul of this good Prophet of the Lord affected and afflicted, upon the account of the publique National abominations, and defilements.

In like manner it is said of righteous and just *Lot*, that he was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked (meaning the *Sodomites*, among whom he lived.) *For that righteous man dwelling among them* (saith the Text) *in seeing, and hearing, vexed his righteous soul, from day to day, with their unlawful deeds,* 2 *Pet.* 2. 7, 8. He lived among abominable men, that cared neither for right nor reason, and this greived and tormented his righteous soul, as if it had been upon a rack, as the word implies. So it is said of our dear Lord, that he was greived for the hardness of their hearts, *Mark.* 3. 5. But to bring it more close to the present visitation of the Lord, and what a special preservative and antidote this gratious qualification of soul is for the keeping off of this severe stroke of the Lord: Look into *Ezek.* 9. even the whole Chapter; there you shall find, *that the Man who was cloathed with linnen, which had the Writers Inckhorn by his side, was commissionated from the Lord, to go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a Mark upon the Foreheads of the men that did sigh, and cry for all the abominations that were done in the midst thereof.* And after him follows the men, who had the slaughter weapons in their

hands, and they were to go through the City and smite, and slay utterly old and young, both Maids and little Children, and Women, but not to come near any man upon whom was the Mark. God had a remnant among this wicked and back-sliding generation, and they must be first marked, and these are described to be such, as did sigh and cry for all the abominations of the times, and all that time the iniquity of the House of *Israel* and *Judah* was exceeding great, the Land was full of blood, and the City full of perverseness, and what other their abominations were, the Chapter before doth evidently declare it.

In like manner when the Passover was to be instituted was the blood of the Lamb to be a token to the children of *Israel* upon the houses were they were; So that the Lord seeing the blood that was struck upon the door-posts did pass over them, and suffered not the Destroyer to come in and smite them, when he smote the land of *Egypt*. The Plague was not to come upon the *Israelites* to destroy them, *Exod.* 12. 12, 13, 22, 23. Well then, wilt thou be of the number of Gods marked ones, that the Destroying Angel may pass over thee, and the plague come not upon thee, when God is smiting the land, as now he is, by the destroying Pestilence: O see then that thy heart is brought into this holy frame, to sigh and mourn not only for thine own personal evils, but also for the crying sins and abominations of the times. But surely, if thou canst swim down with the stream of the times, and hear the holy and precious name of God dishonoured and blasphemed daily, his Spirit derided, his Saints and Ordinances villified and

and defamed, his Meſſengers abuſed, and the way of Holineſs reproached. Or if thou canſt behold wickedneſs walking up and down with a bold, impudent forehead, and men and women of a filthy, impure, ſpotted converſation, and not ſhed one tear, nor ſigh and mourn under ſuch National abominations; ſurely it argues, that the grace of ſaving and ſound Converſion and Repentance was never yet effectually wrought in thy ſoul; if ſo, thou canſt not but mourn under the ſence of ſin, whether in thy ſelf or in any other. The want of which temper and ſpirit, in the caſe of the Inceſtuous perſon, made the Apoſtle *Paul* to reprehend the Church of *Corinth*, telling them, that they were puffed up, and had not rather *mourned, that he that had done that deed, might be taken away from among them*, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2. Well then if you would be Gods marked ones, ſee that you be *Sions* mourning ones, remembring what our dear Lord hath left on record, for the abundant ſatisfaction and refreſhment of ſuch ſorrowful ſouls, ***Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted***, Mat. 5. 4. It is taken generally for a mourning or ſorrowing for ſin, as it ſtands in oppoſition with a ſpirit of jollity and voluptuous living, *Luk.* 16. 19, 25. Such ſhall be comforted, they ſhall never miſs of outward and inward comforts. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy*, Pſal. 126. 5. Their ſorrow ſhall be recompenſed with gladneſs. For to this end was Chriſt anointed to his Office of Mediatorſhip; *That he might comfort all that mourn*, whether upon the account of ſin on the miſeries of *Sion*, *To appoint unto them that mourn in Sion, to give unto them beauty for aſhes*; beautiful garments, goodly apparrel,

apparel, instead of ashes, which they were wont to strew upon their heads, and sit in them when they mourned, as a testification of their excessive sorrow and greif, *Job* 1. 8. *Jonah.* 3. 6. *Mat.* 11. 21. The oyle of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; by which we are to understand, the beautiful, resplendent, refreshing gifts and graces of the spirit of God, *Heb.* 1. 9. *That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that he might be glorified,* Isa. 61. 2, 3. Oak-trees of righteousness, trees of the greatest strength and duration, by which is meant, that those that are ingrafted into Christ by faith; and such are all true mourners in *Sion*, they shall not only bring forth fruits of righteousness, but they shall also have firme, durable, and permanent consolation, and strength in Christ. *Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow, and mourning shall flee away,* Isa. 51. 11.

Secondly, If thy repentance be sincere, and sound, and such as will stand thee in stead in a calamitous day; it will then work in thee a true hatred, and abhorrency of all manner of evil. *Job* abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, *Job* 42. 6. So in the 40. of *Job* and the 4. *verse. Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee; I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Wo is me* (saith the Prophet *Isaiah*) *for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips,* Isa. 6. 5. But to come more close, as to the present dispensation, and visitation of the Lord. In the 6th. of *Ezekiel*, The Lord having threatned the Pestilence among other his sore destroying Judgments, and how the slain should fall

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in the midst of them, He promiseth nevertheless, that he will leave a remnant that should escape the Sword among the Nations. And how must this remnant be qualified? What thoughts and apprehensions shall they have of themselves, by reason of their abominable sins? See the 9. *verse* of that *Chapter*. *And they that escape of you* (saith the Lord) *shall remember me among the Nations, whither they shall be carried Captives; because, I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me; and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their Idols.* And what follows? *They shall loath themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.* So in the 36. of *Ezekiel*, speaking of the restauration of *Israel*, how that he will take them from among the Heathen, and gather them out of all Countries, and bring them into their own Land, and save them from all their uncleanesses, in the 11. *verse*. *Then* (saith he) *shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.* This shall be the temper and spirit of the Lords escaped remnant, they shall loath themselves in their own sight for their iniquities, or for all the evils that they have committed, as it is *Ezek.* 20. 43. They shall even abhor and detest themselves for their iniquities, which will appear so odious, filthy, and abominable in their sight. As the *Israelites* loathed the Manna in contempt, counting it base or vile, in comparison with other meats, *Num* 25. 5. Or as *Job* loathed his own life, when his soul would chuse strangling and death rather then life, *Job* 7. 15, 16. This indignation or bitter hatred against sin, is made a fruit, or a note of true repentance, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

Now

Now ſoul, examine the ſoundneſs and ſincerity of thy Repentance hereby. Did the ſighs of thy ſin, ever work in thee a hatred, and abhorrency in thy ſoul againſt ſin? Did it ever make thee to abhor thy ſelf in duſt and aſhes? to loath thy ſelf in thine own ſight? An impenitent perſon may refrain from ſin, but a true converted, and penitent perſon will hate ſin. An impenitent perſon, may forbare to ſwear; but a true convert, *feareth an oath*, Eccleſ. 9. 2. A wicked perſon, may abſtain from ſome groſs evils; but the godly perſon, *will abſtain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 22. A wicked perſon, may leave ſome evil; but the godly, *and ſuch as love the Lord will hate evil*, Pſal. 97. 10. A wicked perſon, may abandon ſome evil way; but the truly repenting perſon, *hateth every falſe way*, Pſal. 119. 104. A wicked and an impenitent perſon, may refrain from telling a lye; but the godly and ſuch as are truly converted, *will hate and abhor lying*, verſ. 163. A wicked man, may perhaps check himſelf for his unclean thoughts; but the godly man, *hateth vain thoughts*, verſ. 113. And as *David* in the caſe of a wicked perſon, ſo will the godly ſay upon the account of all and every ſin. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred*, Pſal. 139. 21, 22. Now to work this hatred, deteſtation, and averſion in thy will againſt ſin: Take theſe helps.

Conſider, Firſt, What ſin is in it ſelf.

Secondly, How God is provoked with it.

Thirdly, How thou art hurt and prejudiced by it.

Firſt, Conſider then, what ſin is in its ſelf.

Sin in its ſelf is fouler then any Fiend or Di-

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vel in Hell; becauſe, it made that ſo, as fire is hotter then water that is heated.

2ly. It is extreamly ill, nothing comes nearer it; for take ſin in the abſtract, ſo its a greater ill then the damnation of a mans ſoul: For when two ills fight together, that which conquers muſt needs be the greater. Now when a man hath lain in Hell ten thouſand years, he is as far from coming out as ever, for the eternal duration in Hell cannot expiate ſin.

3ly. It is moſt infectious, and therefore compared to a Leproſie; For the firſt ſin that peeped into the world ſtained the beauty of it. No ſooner was ſin committed by *Adam*, but the Stars ſeemed impure in Gods ſight: the creatures were all at variance, the earth full of Briars and Thorns, and all things ſubjected unto the Curſe.

4ly. It is moſt filthy, and therefore compared to the moſt vile things that can be named, *To menſtruous raggs*, *To the vomit of Dogs*; and whereas no dirt or filthy thing, can ſtain a Sun-beam; ſin ſtains a more glorious creature, which is the ſoul of man.

5ly. It is of a helliſh nature, that it draws out, and takes into it ſelf, the wrath of God, being full of curſed conſequences. 1. Privative, the loſs of Gods favour, the blood of Chriſt, the guard of Angels, peace of Conſcience; then which, what can be more obnoxious? 2. Poſitive, It brings all miſery ſpiritual, hardneſs of heart, blindneſs of mind, horrour of conſcience, deſpair, *&c.* with all temporal loſſes and croſſes here, and hereafter eternal torments both of ſoul and body, in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone forever more, *Rev.* 21. 8.

Secondly,

Secondly, Consider how God is provoked with it.

For 1. Each sin is the only object of Gods infinite hatred; what infinite of infinites of hatred hast thou then upon thy soul, with all thy sins, when each sin hath the infinite hatred of God upon it.

2. Each sin is against the Majesty of that dreadful God of Heaven and Earth, who can turn all things into Hell; nay, Heaven and Hell into nothing by his word. Now against this God thou sinnest; and what art thou but dust and ashes, a lump of filth, and of uncleanness, and all that is naught? And what is thy Life, but a Span, a Bubble, a Dream, a Shadow of a Dream, and shall such a thing offend such a dreadful and glorious Majesty.

3. Every sin strikes at the glory of Gods pure eye, which cannot look upon iniquity, *Hab.* 1, 13.

4. Sin is that which killed his Son, the least sin could not be pardoned, but by Christs carrying his heart blood to his Father, and offering it for sin.

5. Each sin is an offence to all his mercies. This aggravated the sin upon *Ely*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 29. and upon *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 8, 9. Mercy is the most eminent Attribute of God, and therefore the sin against it is the greater. With what aggravations then are our sins committed in the time of the Gospel?

Thirdly, Consider how thou art hurt and prejudiced by it. Each sin (I mean unrepented of) kills thy soul, which is better then all the world. It robs thee of abundance of joy and comfort, and will cause thee to walk heavily in the bitterness and

and anguish of thy soul perhaps all thy days; as *David* and *Hezekiah* did. And how dreadful was that example of *Francis Spira*, who after his backsliding lived a while in exquisite horror, and after died in despair? And know, that thine own conscience will one day accuse thee for every sin thou livest wilfully in, though now it seems hid unto thee, and thy conscience is more then a thousand witnesses. And for the sins which peradventure thou now livest in, and accountest but petty and venial, many poor souls are at this instant burning in hell fire. By all which thou mayst clearly see what misery and hurt does attend on thee continually for the same: And therefore when any bait of Satan, or old companions would allure thee to sin, take this *Dilemma*; Either I must repent, and then it will bring more sorrow, then the pleasure or profit did good, or, if I repent not, it will be then the damnation of my soul.

These few things, among many others, may, if seriously pondered upon, be an effectual means to work thy heart to this hatred and detestation of sin, and a loathing of thy self for the same, which as it will evidence the truth of thy repentance, so will it be an excellent preservative against the now pestilential destroying Sickness. Now when the sight and sence of thy sins hath wrought thy soul to a kindly mourning and sorrowing for the same before the Lord, and that for all kinds and sorts of sins, to wit,

1. The weaknesses, frailties and pollutions of thy nature, even thy proness and inclination to sin; for though these being unconsented unto are no actual sins, yet are they matter of true sorrow,

grief

grief and humiliation to a sincere Christian, that he is such a polluted and unclean creature, and so apt to fall into all sin, if he be not restrained and prevented by Gods grace.

2. For the sinful acts and habits of thy unregenerate life, with all the aggravations belonging to them.

3. The slips and relapses of thy most regenerate life, and the infinite frailties and infirmities that still adhere to it; And that thy soul is wrought also to a real hatred and detestation of all sin, so that now thou begineſt to loath sin, as a thing not onely hurtful, but ugly and abominable; a foul and beastly thing, and that which is most contrary, not onely to the pure and unspotted essence and being of God, but also contrary to, and unbefitting the nature and excellency of a reasonable creature, as man is. I say when these gracious dispositions of soul, of grief and hatred for sin are wrought in thee, then wilt thou not be ashamed from a contrite and wounded heart, to make an humble confession and acknowledgement thereof before the face of Almighty God, our heavenly Father, begging pardon and forgiveness for them. Then wilt thou own thy self a vile sinner, who hast worthily deserved his wrath; then wilt thou make an enumeration of the particular sorts of thy sins, of which thou knoweſt thy self guilty: Then wilt thou aggravate those sins upon thy self, by all the circumstances and heightning accidents of them; comprizing all thy unknown and unconfest sins under some such penitentiary speech and expression as that of *Davids*, *Who can tell how oft he offendeth? cleanse thou me from my secret faults*

faults, *Pſal.*19.12. And as thou art to confeſs unto God, and give glory unto him, *Joſh.*7.19. whom thou haſt cheifly and principally offended; ſo art thou commanded alſo to confeſs unto men, *James* 5.16. *Confeſs your faults one to another*. And that for theſe reaſons.

1. That ſo we may be capable of one anothers prayers.

2. Becauſe it may be our ſins are ſuch as have injured others, and then confeſſion unto them, is the firſt degree towards reconciliation, *Matth.*5.24. Or if they be onely againſt God, yet the confeſſion of them to the Lords faithful Miniſters and Servants, will not be improper, but in ſome kind neceſſary to ſuch as deſire the abſolution and forgiveneſs of them, *Jam.*5.15.

3. Becauſe in ſin there is the guilt and the corruption, the one to be pardoned the other cured. The firſt being confeſt to God to obtain his pardon, ought alſo, if it have been offenſive and ſcandalous to the Congregation, to be acknowledged to them, that, that expreſſion of repentance may make ſatisfaction to them for the ill example, and avert and deter from ſin, whom it had invited to it. And ſurely, the diſcloſing of the particular ſtate of thy ſinful ſick ſoul, and adviſing with others, eſpecially the Phyſicians of the ſoul, how and by what means a cure may be wrought; how a raging ſin may be ſubdued, the occaſions and temptations to it avoided, cannot but be very profitable, comfortable and advantageous, as to the proſperous conſtitution, and health of thy ſoul. The neceſſity of which confeſſion and acknowledgement of ſin will further appear, not onely from

the practise of *David*, Psal. 51. 3, 4. *Psal.* 32, 5. *Ezra* Chap. 9. 6, 7. *Nehemiah Chap.* 9. 32. *Job* 40. 3. *Jer.* 14. 7. *Daniel* 9. 4, 5. and other holy men in Scripture; but also from such express Texts of Scripture as these, *If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*, Psal. 32. 5. So *Prov.* 28. 13. *He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but who so confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy:* And this leads me to the Third particular, as that which will evidence the soundness and sincerity of our Repentance.

Thirdly: If thy Repentance be sound, there will be a willing forsaking and renunciation of all sin, an abjuring of all thy former evil ways, both of the sins themselves, and the occasions which were wont to bring thee to those sins, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22. For, all thy fear and trembling at the wrath of God to come for sin, thy sorrow for sin, thy hating and loathing of sin, will not make thy Contrition full and perfect, unless thy will also do his part, and resolve to forsake and leave it. For true Contrition or dying unto sin, is such a compunction of the heart for the same, as is joyned with a purpose, will, and resolution to leave, and forsake it. *The gratious soul will hate every false way*, Psal. 119. 104. and not tolerate or allow it self, in any known evil or bosome corruption whatsoever, *Psal.* 18. 23. It will not say, as *Lot* said of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one?* Gen. 19. 20. Or

as *Naaman* the *Syrian*, *The Lord pardon thy Servant in this thing, when I bow down my self in the House of* Rimmon, 2 *King.* 5. 18. It will not account any sin little, which will bring upon us the great wrath of so infinite a Majesty. It knows and beleives, that the weight even of little sins, as it were small sands, will sinck the ship of our souls, as well as our greater and grosser sins. That small leaks in Ships, and small breeches in Walls being neglected, will endanger the loss both of Ships and Cities: And that such Tradesmen, as in their accompts regard not small sums, will quickly prove Bankrupts.

Disobedience, though in never so small matters, as in eating of an Apple, and gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath, looking into, and touching of the Ark, are yet in Gods account no small matters: For how severly hath he punished all these, then which what can we imagine slighter? But gratious souls know, that it is not the smallness of the thing, that lessens either our obedience or disobedience, but that it is Gods Commandment, that ties to obedience in lesser things as well as in greater, which Command of his is despised, as well in the breach of the lesser, as of the greater. I say then, the truly repenting soul, will not allow it self in any known sin, though accounted never so little, since the very least are committed against so great a God, and bring upon us so great a danger. It will not excuse, extenuate, mince, or hide sin as *Adam*, nor cast it off himself upon others shoulders, as *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 21. But it would willingly be divorced and separated both in spirit, conversation, and affection, from all and every the pol-

lutions, and defilements of sin; which if wilfully and willingly lived in, he knows will expose his soul to inevitable ruine and destruction.

Consider then, hath the wrath of God Almighty, and the everlasting wo denounced to all impenitent sinners made thee fear and tremble? Have thy tremblings been seconded with a true and hearty sorrow for thy sins? Hath thy sorrow been such as hath brought forth hate and loathing of sin, so that sin hath appeared ugly and abominable unto thee? Hath there then followed an humble confession, and laying open of thy sins before God? begging pardon and remission of them, with a desire to be rid of them, and a real purpose and resolution, to abandon them and forsake them? This will evidence, that thy service of sin hath given up the ghost, and that thou hast a firme resolution of leading a new life, and returning unto the Lord with all thy heart; which is the fourth and last particular to be insisted on, in this subject of sound Evangelical repentance. For what is Repentance indeed, in the true definition of it, but a change of the mind, or a coming to a mans self again, to a right understanding after a man hath erred; consisting, in a turning of the whole heart from Satan and Sin unto God, that is, to serve God in newness of Life, because he that lives in sin, serves the Devil, and belongs to his jurisdiction.

This definition you shall find full and whole in our Saviours words to Saint *Paul*, when he appeared to him going to *Damascus*, Act. 26. 18. as *Paul* himself reporteth them; namely, *That he would send him to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them*

them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them that are ſanctified; Which voice *Paul* thereſaith, he was obedient unto and thereupon went and ſhewed firſt to the *Jews*, and then to the *Gentiles*, *That they ſhould repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.* So, that according to the definition, Repentance hath two parts, *An Averſion or turning away from Satan and Sin*, that is the firſt; then a *Converſion or turning unto God by Newneſs of Life*, that is the ſecond part: but I proceed.

Fourthly, The laſt thing that will evidence the ſincerity of that Repentance, which will be prevalent with the Lord, to avert his wrath, and quench the fire of his indignation that is broken out among us, is, a returning unto the Lord with all the heart, *Jer.* 3. 12. *Return thou back-ſliding Iſrael* (ſaith the Lord) *and I will not cauſe mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful* (ſaith the Lord) *and I will not keep anger for ever. Onely acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou haſt tranſgreſſed, and repent and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions* (ſaith the Lord) *ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruine*, Ezek. 18.30. In the 2. of *Joel*, the Lord threatning the terribleneſs of his Judgements, in reference to his great Army, how that the Earth ſhould quake before them, and the Heavens ſhould tremble, the Sun and Moon ſhould be dark, and the Stars ſhould withdraw their ſhining; In the 12. *verſe*, the Lord exhorteth them to a thorough repentance, as the only means to ſtop the currant of this devouring and ſweeping Judgment: *There-*

fore also now (saith the Lord) *turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gratious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

And this Exhortation is urged by divers Arguments,

1. By promise of temporal blessings, namely, plentiful fruits of the earth, even to the reparation of all their former losses, by the Famine, and removal of the Northren Army from them, *vers.* 18. *to* 28.

2. Of spiritual Evangelical priviledges, whereof those temporals were but an imperfect pledge, *viz.* plentiful pourings out of his spirit, and his gifts upon all flesh, Gentiles as well as Jews, *ver.* 28, 29. Salvation and deliverance of an elect remnant in his Church, after the Lord hath manifested, by dreadful signs, the terrour of his coming, *vers.* 30, 31, 32.

2ly. This Exhortation is urged, by threatning of destruction against all the oppressing enemies of the Church. These are the blessed fruits (among others) of that repentance, that is, a returning unto the Lord with all the heart. Suitable to which, is that of the Prophet *Jeremy*, *If thou wilt return, O Israel* (saith the Lord) *return unto me, and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove*, Jer. 4. 1. Then shalt thou not wander, thou shalt not go into exile. Which foregoing places do imply, that God is not pleased with shews, or flying thoughts, or loose purposes, or half a heart, but requires an upright

upright turning away from evil, and a thorough converſion to himſelf, and that which is good, and not to idols, or any other vanities whatſoever. There is a ſpecial place to this purpoſe, in *Deut.* 4. 29, 30. It ſpeaks of the Lords ſcattering of them among the Nations, and how they ſhould be left few in number among the Heathen, whither the Lord ſhould lead them; *But if from thence* (ſaith the Lord, by his ſervant *Moſes*) *thou ſhalt ſeek the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt find him, if thou ſeek him with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul. When thou art in tribulation, and all theſe things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn unto the Lord thy God, and ſhalt be obedient unto his voice.* For the neglect whereof, ſee what a bitter complaint the Lord took up againſt *Iſrael*, Amos 4. 6. *How he had given them cleanneſs of teeth, and want of bread in all places, and had ſent among them the Peſtilence after the manner of* Egypt, *and had overthrown ſome of them, as he overthrew* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and they were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning, yet did they not return unto the Lord.* But mark what follows? *Therefore, thus will I do unto thee O Iſrael, and becauſe I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* And what did he threaten he would do unto them, for their obſtinacy and incorrigableneſs if they repented not? The 2. *verſe* declares it. *The Lord God hath ſworn by his holineſs, that lo, the days ſhall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks and your poſterity with fiſh-hooks.* Whats the meaning of that? underſtand, that like as great fiſhes are pull'd and drawn up out of the Sea with hooks, ſo he would cauſe them to be pulled out of their Land by the

enemy, how loath and unwilling soever they were to quit it. To prevent which, the Lord exhorts them that they would prepare to meet him with true conversion, as a special means to appease his wrath, and prevent their ruine. When *Ephrahim* was turned, and had repented, how was the heart of the Lord taken with it? *Jer.*31 18,19,20. *Hos.* 11.8,9. O then what shall I say; what arguments shall I make use of to excite thee, O *England*, to a speedy return unto the Lord? surely, thou hast had many gracious invitations in the day of thy prosperity and peace; but thou wouldst not hearken thereunto: Many premonitions and forewarnings of this day that is now come upon thee by the mouthes of the Lords faithful Messengers and Servants.

And upon this account may it not be said of thee as is recorded and declared concerning the Lords merciful dealings with his own people, and City of *Jerusalem*, where he had placed his name and worship, notwithstanding their great and manifold provocations; *Yet the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place. But* (now how did they requite the Lord for all his kindness and long sufferance towards them?) *they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy,* 2 *Chron* 36.15,16. no healing, no help, their sores were so putrified and festred, that they grew incurable. As the Lord by his Prophet *Isaiah* complained, chap.1. verse 4,6. *The whole head became sick, and the whole heart*

heart faint: *From the ſole of the foot even unto the head* (from the loweſt to the higheſt, from the Beggar upon the dunghil, to the King upon the throne) *there was no ſoundneſs in it, but wounds, and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores, which could not be bound up, nor mollified with ointment.* The whole body of the State and Nation was ſo univerſally corrupted and depraved, that the Lord calls them, *A ſinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers, children that were corrupters, and ſuch as had forſaken the Lord, and provoked the holy one of Iſrael unto anger, and had gone backward.* And tells them further, that he was even weary with ſmiting and puniſhing of them; *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more*: Yet ſee for all their great and greivous provoking ſins, and that general depravation and corruption that was among all ſorts, from the higheſt to the loweſt of them, as the 21, 22, and 23 verſes of that Chapter do clearly demonſtrate the truth of it; How does the Lord notwithſtanding invite them again to repentance, by gracious promiſes of pardon, and the beſtowing of all good things upon them? *Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgement, releive the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow*; intimating wherein they ſhould manifeſt the ſincerity of their repentance, and returning unto the Lord: And then mark what follows; *Come now let us reaſon together (ſaith the Lord) though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall*

eat

eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse, and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword. O the great indulgence and forbearance of the Lord towards this so generally depraved, corrupted and unreformed a people! Which is further notably set forth in that of the third of *Zephany*; *Wo to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing City, she obeyed not the voyce: she received not correction, she trusted not in the Lord: She drew not near to her God. Her Princes within are roaring lions, her Judges are evening wolves, they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her Prophets are light and treacherous persons: Her Priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.* And what follows? *I have cut off the Nations, their towers are desolate, I made their streets waste that none passeth by, their Cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is no inhabitant. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction*; (thou wilt now be warned by my judgements upon the Nations round about thee) *so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them, but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.*

The filthy leprosie and contagion of sin had so overspread and infested the whole Nation, whereby she became now ripe for destruction. And therefore did the Lord wound her with the wound of an enemy, & with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of her iniquity, because her sins were increased, *Jer.*30.14. And now the wrath of the Lord breaks out, and it could not be appeased; For *he brought upon them the King of the* Chaldees, *who slew their youngmen with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young*

man

man or maiden, old man or him that ſtooped for age; he gave them all into his hand, 2 Chron. 36. 16, 17. They would not take example by the judgements of God which he executed upon the heathen round about them, and now God will make them the examples of his fierce indignation and wrath: *Patientia læſa fit furor.* His abuſed and worn out patience is now turned into implacable anger; His Spirit will not always ſtrive, *Gen.* 6. 3. *Jeruſalem* had her day, *Luk.* 19. 42. God would have gathered her, but ſhe would not, and now her houſe is left unto her deſolate, *Matth.* 23. 37, 38.

Wilt thou then, O *England*, take a view of thy ſins: and ſee whether they do not equal, if not overpaſs the ſins of that Nation? Are not thy ſins grown epidemical, and ſpread through the whole body? may it not be ſaid of thee as of that Nation, that the whole Head is ſick, and the whole Heart faint? Can the Throne plead an exemption from this univerſal contagion? Can the Prince or Peaſant, the Nobility or Gentry, the Laick or Eccleſiaſtick? Have not all ſorts and degrees of men and women deeply corrupted themſelves, and turned aſide from following the Lord? When did ſin and tranſgreſſion more abound then in this our age and generation? when did it walk up and down with a more impudent and braſen face? when did you ever ſee Pride to be prouder? Oppreſſion more oppreſſive? Adultery more adulterous? Luxury more luxurious? Cruelty more cruel? Unrighteouſneſs more unrighteous, and all manner of diſobedience to God and his commands, more diſobedient? When was Drunkeneſs and Prodigality, Swearing, Curſing and Blaſpheming,

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Ranting and Roaring, Atheiſm and Epicuriſm, more abounding? When was there a more prophanation of Gods holy things? a greater pollution of his Sanctuary? more violence done to his law? a greater contempt of Godlineſs, under the form and outward appearance of it? when was their more ſcoffing at Holineſs, and deriding the Spirit of God, and a more open oppoſition of the pure way and Worſhip of God, then now in our days? And was there ever a greater Apoſtacy and falling away from the Faith, even by ſuch, who once did ſhine as ſtars in the firmament of the Churches Heaven, making ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience, to preſerve a little airy honour, and a temporary periſhing eſtate? And how hath the treacherous dealers dealt treacherouſly? and the Brother betrayed and delivered up the brother to death, the Fathers the Children, and the children riſen up againſt their Parents, and cauſing them to be put to death? according as was foretold by our dear Lord, *Matth.* 10.21. And ſurely, we may take up the ſame doleful lamentation and complaint with the Prophet *Iſaiah*, namely, *That truth is fallen in our ſtreets, and equity cannot enter, yea truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himſelf a prey*, Iſa. 59. 14,15. Yea, hath not wickedneſs been eſtabliſhed by a law? and will not that woe be the portion of ſome who have decreed unrighteous decrees, and write grievouſneſs which they have preſcribed; *To turn aſide the needy from judgement, and to take away the right from the poor of Gods people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherleſs?* Iſa. 10. 1,2.

And

And what shall I say to the generality of the late professing people of this generation, when Religion was in fashion, and the ready way and step to preferment? was it not made even a stalking Horse, by many to obtain their base sinister, most vile and unworthy ends? How furiously did many drive on *Jehu*-like, under the most specious and plausible pretences of piety, and doing great exploits for God; *Come see my zeal for the Lord*, breaking down the Images, and destroying the Worshippers of *Baal*, 2 *King.* 9. 20. *and* 10. 16, 19, 26. And all this, but to accomplish and bring about their own ambitious and vainglorious designes, the better to get up into the saddle, and that the Crown of all earthly glory might be set the faster and firmer upon their own heads? And when they had obtained that which their covetous and ambitious hearts, so eagerly hunted after, inriching themselves by the spoiling and impoverishing of others, what a *requiem* did they then sing unto their souls? what a *lullaby* to their earthly satisfactions and contentments?

How did they hug themselves in their great and large territories, and new obtained possessions? And now farewel Profession, Religion, and Conscience, but as it may be made serviceable to promote and maintain a carnal selfish interest and end. And it is lamentable to consider what a vain, secure, proud, formal, fashionable, temporizing, self-seeking, self-admiring, self-exalting spirit, did most Professors then grow into. O, the hatred, variance, emulations, seditions, the debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whis-

whiſperings, ſwellings, tumults, grudgings, evil ſpeakings, raſh and uncharitable cenſurings, and moſt unchriſtian condemnings of one another, that was then found among them.

O the breakings and rendings, the ſeparatings and dividings that ſprang up from theſe roots of bitterneſs, whereby many ſincere ſouls were troubled, and others thereby became greatly defiled. Surely, upon a ſerious and ſad reflection hereon, it may be ſaid as concerning the Diviſions of *Reuben*, *Judg.* 5. 15. that for theſe things *there were great thoughts of heart*, great impreſſions upon the ſpirits of many that did truly and ſincerely fear the Lord. Nay, what ſhall we ſay to thoſe furious, blind, zealous, phariſaical ſpirits of thoſe times, who did breath out threatnings, perſecutions and ſlaughters even againſt the Diſciples and ſervants of the Lord, becauſe they could not conſcienciouſly (and not factiouſly, as they termed it) conform to a publick Directory for worſhip, or ſubmit to ſome unwarrantable and unſcriptural impoſitions and injunctions, whereby many were caſt into Priſons, their goods violently taken away, and themſelves and families expoſed to great miſery, neceſſity and want? So little did appear, and (much to be lamented it is) ſo little does ſtill appear *of that wiſdom that is from above, that is pure and peaceable, and gentle and eaſie to be entreated*, Jam. 3. 17. So little of that ſpirit, whoſe fruit is demonſtrable by its meekneſs, gentleneſs and goodneſs, *Gal.* 5. 22. So little of that *charity that ſuffereth long, and is kind, that envieth not, that vaunteth not it ſelf* (or is not raſh) *and puffed up*, 1 Cor. 13, 4.

And

And, O that I could ſay, there was not the ſame ſpirit ſtill, under ſeveral forms of profeſſion, that is, luſting to pride, envy, cenſoriouſneſs, ſeparation, domination, and perſecution. How violently do moſt men ſeek to advance, and ſet up their own opinion ſtill? What a Babel, and confuſion of languages are there ſtill among us? Some crying, *Lo here*, others, *Lo there*. What force and compulſion is there ſtill exerciſed upon Conſcience, to beat men as it were into Religion, the certain Mark and Character of Antichriſt, that Man of ſin, who Satan-like, works with *all powers, ſigns, and lying wonders*, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 9. Whereas *Religio docenda, non coercenda*, Religion is to be taught, and not to be forcedly thruſt and impoſed upon the Conſcience. When the Scripture tells us, that *fervent Charity ſhould cover a multitude of ſins*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 8. But alaſs, it is not large and long enough, to cover one ſin or ſlip, or perhaps but an infirmity, or weakneſs in a Brother. When the Scripture tells us, *We ought to bear one anothers burthens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt*, Gal. 6. 2. *And that nothing ſhould be done through ſtrife, or vain-glory, but that in lowlineſs of mind, each ſhould eſteem others, better then themſelves*, Philip. 2. 3. When the Scripture tells us, *That* (as the Elect of God, &c.) *we ſhould put on bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*, Col. 3. 12, 13. *And that with all lowlineſs, and meekneſs*, &c. *we ſhould endeavour to keep the unity of the ſpirit, in the bond of peace*, Eph. 4. 2, 3.

When the Scripture tells us, That it is a *Diotrephes* ſpirit, to love to have the *preheminence* in

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the Church, 3 Epist. *Joh.* of 9. *vers.* that is, who out of ambition shall exalt himself above his fellow brethren, seeking to Lord it over them, and to draw all the respect to himself alone. Contrary to that of *Peter*, who forbids the Elders, to be *Lords over Gods heritage, but to be Example to the flock*, 2 *Pet.* 5. 3. And most disagreeable to the pattern and example of that blessed Apostle *Paul* himself, and other the faithful Ministers of Christ, who in his Epistle to the Church of *Corinths*, declareth, *That thee had not a dominion over their faith, but were helpers of their joy*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. *And that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. The weapons which they used, by the Gospel of Christ to convert men, and to bring them under the Kingdome and obedience of Christ, were not carnal, that is, such as natural, and worldly men are wont to make use of; either by eloquence or deceit, or by force to bring others in subjection under them; but mighty or powerful through God, in moving and convincing of the hearts of men by his Spirit, *Act.* 16. 14. Surely, if these things were seriously laid to heart, we must needs acknowledge that the sins of professing people, as well as others, have been highly provoking unto the Lord, as to the drawing down of this sore visitation of the Plague among us.

And this may put us to silence, that we murmur not, and will justifie the righteousness of God in the way of his severity, as he now comes forth against many of his own people. *For we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, Rom. 3. 23. And what says the Lord by the Prophet, *Amos. All the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword, which*

which ſay, The evil ſhall not overtake nor prevent us? Amos 9. 10. So the Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy* complains: *For among my people are found wicked men: they lay waite, as he that ſetteth ſnares, they ſet a trap, they catch men. As a Cage is full of birds, ſo are their houſes full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they ſhine, they overpaſs the deeds of the wicked, they judge not the cauſe, the cauſe of the fatherleſs: yet they proſper: and the right of the needy do they not judge.* And mark what follows? *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this,* Jer. 25. 26, 27, 28, 29. *And who gave* Jacob *for a ſpoil, and* Iſrael *to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he againſt whom we have ſinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.* And conſider well what follows. *Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of battle, and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart,* Iſa. 42. 24, 25. So *Jeremy* the 12. 7. *I have forſaken mine houſe, I have left mine heritage, I have given the dearly beloved of my ſoul into the hands of her enemies.*

And what may we gather from all this? Surely thus much, That no near relations as to God, or any external priviledges, can yeild a protection, from a ſin-deſerved correction. Remember *Lots* wife, Luk. 17. 32. Vengeance cloſely waits on diſobedience: Punihment doth dog impiety. *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep,* ſaith *Paul* to the Church of *Corinths*, ſpeaking of eating and drinking unworthily at the

Lords Table, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29, 30. God is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, with any approbation or tolleration as to his own peculiar people. *If his children forsake my law* (speaking of *David* and his seed, as a Type of Christ and the true spiritual seed) *and walk not in my judgments: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments:* What then says the Lord? *Then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes*, Psal. 89. 30. The Lord hath laid righteousness to the rule, and waighed his justice in a ballance; and his judgments are right, and in faithfulness he doth afflict, Psal. 119. 75. His sentence is past forth, and stands irrevocable: *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil*, Rom. 2. 9. If we sin we shall suffer. How? *Aut a Deo vindicante, aut ab ipso homine penitente*, as one says excellent well; Either from God revenging, or themselves repenting. For he that repenteth himself of his sins, doth punish himself for his sins.

And now, O *England*, if thou repent not, let me say unto thee, as the Prophet *Isaiah* Chap. 10. 2. to the men of that generation. What wilt thou do now in the day of thy visitation, and in the desolation that shall come from far. To whom wilt thou flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory? O then bethink thy self yet, before it be too late, before the wrath of the Lord break out, so that their will be no remedy. O gather thy self together, O Nation not desirous, before the Decree bring forth, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon thee, before the whole Land be devoured by the fire of his jealousie, before he make a speedy riddance of all that dwell in the land.

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As the Lord by the Prophet *Zephaniah* exhorts, *Chap.* 1. 18. *Chap.* 2. 1, 2. *O then return unto the Lord thy God, for how haſt fallen by thine iniquity. Take unto you words, and turn unto the Lord, ſay unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly,* Hoſea 14. 1. Suitable to which is the Churches exhortation, *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up,* Hoſea 6. 1.

This is the way the Lord himſelf propounds for the removal of his ſweeping devouring Judgments, *Turn ye, even to me with all your heart, and with faſting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, who knoweth if he will return, and repent, and leave a bleſſing behind him,* Joel 2. 12, 13. Let the King lay his robe from him, and cover him with ſackcloth, and ſit in aſhes; let man and beaſt be covered with ſackcloath, let there be ſome demonſtrative tokens of a more then ordinary ſorrow and humiliation, for each and every ones ſo highly provoking ſins. *Let all cry mightily to God, yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we periſh not?* This will move Gods repeatings towards us, this will divert his wrath, *Jonah* 3. and the latter end, *Jer.* 31. 20. And that you may not queſtion the truth and certainty of it in the leaſt, will you conſider, that the Lord ſtands engaged by his unalterable word and promiſe to make it good. *If I ſhut up heaven* (ſaith he) *that there be no rain,* &c. *Or if I ſend* Peſtilence *among my people: if my people, which are*

called by my name, ſhall humble themſelves and pray, and ſeek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: What then will he do? *Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their ſin, and will heal their land*, 2 *Chron.* 7. 13, 14. Wherefore let that counſel be acceptable to all, which *Daniel* gave to King *Nabuchadnezzar*. *O King break off thy ſins by righteouſneſs, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility*, Dan. 4. 27. As if he had ſaid, If thou wilt follow the counſel that I give thee, then there is hope, that God will have mercy upon thee, and lengthen thy peace, reſt, and proſperity. And if thou wilt break off thy ſins by righteouſneſs, then thou muſt not onely *looſe the bands of wickedneſs, but thou muſt undo the heavy burdens alſo, and let the oppreſſed go free, and break every yoke. Thou muſt deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor that are caſt out to thy houſe; when thou ſeeſt the naked, thou muſt cover him, and not hide thy ſelf from thy own fleſh*, Iſa. 58. 6, 7.

And ſurely, if this counſel be timouſly accepted, O people of *England!* O City of *London!* though thou haſt treſpaſſed greivouſly againſt the Lord, and broken the Covenant of thy God, and the hand of the Lord is gone out againſt thee, *and death is come up into thy Windows, yea, even entred into thy Palaces*, Jer. 9. 21. Yet know, that if thou humbleſt thy ſelf and repenteſt, *there is hope in Iſrael, concerning this thing*, *Ezra* 10. 2. And O, that thou mayſt know, even in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, before they are hid from thine eyes.

And think not that your flying away can ſecure you, his hand knows how to find you out. *Whether canſt thou go from his ſpirit, or whether canſt thou flee from his preſence*, Pſal. 139. 7. And know aſſuredly, that if thou art ſtill an enemy, and a hater of God and goodneſs, his hand will find thee out, *Pſal.* 21. 8. *Thine hand ſhall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand ſhall find out thoſe that hate thee. Thou ſhalt make them as a fiery Oven in the time of thine anger, the Lord ſhall ſwallow them up in his wrath, and the fire ſhall devour them.* And as *Job* ſaith, *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings. There is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves*, Job 34. 21, 22. *And though thou exalt thy ſelf as the Eagle, and though thou ſet thy neſt among the ſtars, thence will I bring thee down, ſaith the Lord*, Obad. *verſ.* 4. And know whoſoever thou art, though thou ruffleſt it in thy gallantry and pride, if yet thou puts far away from thee the evil day, and cauſeſt the ſeat of violence to come near, that lieſt upon thy bed of Ivory, and ſtretches thy ſelf upon thy Couch, and chaunts to the ſound of the viol, and drinks wine in bowls, and anoint thy ſelf with the cheif oyntments, but greiveſt not for the affiictions of *Joſeph*, that the judgment of God will purſue thee at thy very heels. And if thou repenteſt not, but ſhalt ſtill bleſs thy ſelf in thy heart, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt have peace, though thou walkeſt in the imaginations of thy own heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt: The Lord will not ſpare thee, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt thee, and all the curſes that are written in the Book of God, ſhall lye upon thee, and the Lord*

shall blot out thy name from under heaven, Deut. 29. 19, 20.

The Third spiritual Receit.

When in the conscionable use of the former means, thou findest that this bitter pill or potion of Repentance hath begun to operate upon thy heart, so as to cause it to melt and mourn kindly before the Lord; then in the next place, take a good draught of Faith in the blood of Christ, and put therein also a good quantity of Belief, in the power, faithfulness, and promises of God in Christ. This through the blessing of God, will make this bitter pill to work strongly and effectually, to the expelling of all those virulent, obnoxious, and malignant humours that are such great enemies to a healthful and sound constitution of soul and body, which if unexpelled, that they grow to some head and strength, they will have a very strong influence upon thy spirits, to contract this sore Pestilential distemper, to the endangering oftentimes of the loss, and ruine of the whole man, soul, and body to all eternity.

First, Then this Faith in the blood of Christ, rightly applyed unto thy soul, is and hath been always a very soveraign Receit, and a precious Antidote to expell,

1. All the fiery assaults of Satan.
2. The venome and malignity of sin.

And therefore, among all the several choise peices of our spiritual Armory, laid down in the 6th. of the *Ephesians*: This is recommended, as the most choise and principal peice among them all;

all; *Above all, taking the ſheild of faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.* Some tranſlate it (*in all*) as if he had ſaid, in all things whatſoever you do, ſee that you uſe the ſheild of faith; (*to all*) as if he had ſaid, to all other Graces add this; (*above all*) which is more emphatical, for hereby all the imperfections of the reſt of the Armes are covered, and we are beſt defended againſt all the fiery darts, and aſſaults of Satan, that is, his poyſonous darts: which by their venome inflame the ſoul. The Apoſtle alludes to the cuſtome of old, in times of war, who by their darts ſhot fire; or elſe, when they dipped the heads of their arrows in poiſon, and ſhot them at their enemies, they even fired their fleſh: To prevent which, it is ſaid, that the Souldiers made them large ſheilds of raw Neatſ-leather, which might cover the whole body, ſo that when the fiery venemous darts lighted upon them, they were preſently quenched. All which agrees well with the nature of Satans temptations, which as poiſon and fire, do wound and pierce the ſoul, if they be not ſtopped and quenched by the ſheild of faith, when they hit upon it.

So in the 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. The Apoſtle directs to the making uſe of this moſt excellent peice of a Chriſtians armour of proof, ſpeaking of our adverſary the Devil, who as a roaring Lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour; This counſel he gives, *That we reſiſt him ſtedfaſtly in the faith. Reſiſt the Devil* (ſaith *James*) *and he will flee from you*, Jam. 4. 7. Reſiſt him, when he tempteth and enticeth thee to fullfil thy fleſhly luſts, and to ſeek after the freindſhip of the world. And he will

flee from thee, he will run away; if thou withstand him, oppose him, and set thy self, as it were, in battle array against him; thou wilt find him as very a coward, as ever any that handled a weapon; thou wilt make him run away presently.

But that you may resist him and foil him, you must be sure to resist him, and that stedfastly in the faith; if you make use of this weapon, he will never be able to encounter with you: Faith will foil him. By this weapon, the Saints always overcame him, *Rev.* 12. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.* And how by the blood of the Lamb? Satan will tell thee, thou art a vile, filthy, polluted, and abominable wretch; a great and hainous sinner: but faith in the blood of Christ will tell him, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; yea, the greatest and cheifest of sinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *And that God hath set him forth to be a Propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins*, Rom. 3. 25. And though thou art naturally unclean, and hast contracted much defilement by reason of sin; yet that *Christ hath loved thee, and washed thee from thy sins in his own blood*, Rev. 1. 5. *That in him thou hast redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins*, Col. 1. 14.

Satan will tell thee, thou hast broken the Law, and incurred Gods anger, wrath, hell, and eternal damnation: Faith will tell him, that Christ hath perfectly fulfilled the Law, satisfied divine justice; taken away the curse, and freed thee from condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. and that Jesus Christ by his blood hath pacified Gods anger towards thee, *Rom.* 3. 25. Faith will tell him, thou art not under

der the Law now, and ſo not under the Curſe; and that though the Law does pronounce thee accurſed for the breach of it, yet Chriſt hath redeemed thee from the curſe of the Law, being made a curſe for us, *Gal.*3.10,13. Satan will tell tell thee ſtill thou art unrighteous, and the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God; but faithwill tell him, that thou art waſhed, that thou art ſanctified, that thou art juſtified, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of God, 1 *Cor.* 6.11. And that Chriſt was made ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.*5.21. And as he was made ſin, ſo of God alſo is he made unto us Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, and Redemption. Does Satan tempt thee eo evil? Faith will tell him, that he ſo tempted Chriſt, but Chriſt vanquiſhed him in all his temptaions, *Mat.*4. *And we are more then Conquerors through Chriſt that hath loved us*, Rom. 8.37. Does he yet tempt thee to be proud? tell him, that *God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*, 1 Pet. 5 5. Does he tempt thee to paſſion? tell him, that the *wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God*, Jam. 1.20. Does he tempt thee to uncleaneſs? tell him, thy body is the temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and thou art not thine one, but art bought with a price, and therefore thou muſt glorifie God in thy body, and in thy ſpirit which is Gods, 1 *Cor.*6.19,20.

Does he tempt thee to be a ſervant of men? tell him thou art bought with a price, and ſo freed from that ſervitude, 1 *Cor.*7.23. would he have thee to pleaſe men? tell him, if yet thou ſhouldſt

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pleaſe men, thou ſhouldſt not be the ſervant of Chriſt, *Gal.*1.10. Does he tempt thee to the love of the world? tell him, that if *any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 *Joh.*2. 15. Does he tempt thee to an indifferent, lukewarm ſpirit in the things of God? tell him, that the Lord teſtifies againſt ſuch a ſpirit, that is neither hot nor cold, that he will ſpue it out of his mouth, *Rev* 3.16. Does he tempt thee to fall away, draw back and renounce thy profeſſion; tell him, that ſuch as ſo fall away, ſhall not be renewed again unto repentance, *Seeing they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame*, Heb.6.6. And that if any man draws back, the Lord will have no pleaſure in him, *Heb.* 10.38. You ſee what a moſt excellent weapon this ſheild of Faith is to repel the temptations and aſſaults of Satan upon all accounts.

Secondly, And it is of like force and efficacy to expel the venome and malignity of ſin. Art thou ſtung with it at any time; look up by faith unto the brazen Serpent, there's healing, *Numb.*21.9. Are thy ſins of a ſcarlet dye? Faith in his blood can make them as white as ſnow; are they red like crimſon? it will make them as wool, *Iſa.* 1.18. Are they many and multiplied tranſgreſſions? Faith will tell thee, that where ſin hath abounded, there grace hath much more abounded; that as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, *Rom.*5 20,21. Haſt thou abundantly ſinned? this faith will tell thee, that God will abundantly pardon (he will multiply pardons, *Iſa.* 55.7.) Doſt thou fear the reigning, domineering power

power of ſin? This faith will aſſure thee, That ſin ſhall not have dominion over thee, for that thou art not under the law, but under grace, *Rom.*6.14. Doſt thou yet fear that thy ſins ſhall ſtand on the file, and that God will remember thine iniquity? this faith in Chriſts blood will aſſure thee, that he will blot out thy tranſgreſſions for his own name ſake, and will not remember thy ſins, *Iſa.*43.25.

But perhaps thou art afraid of Death, and of the power of the Grave; this Faith will aſſure thee, that *death is ſwallowed up in victory*, his ſting taken out, that Chriſt hath ranſomed thee from the power of the grave, and hath redeemed thee from death, that he is deaths plague, and the graves deſtruction, *Iſa.* 25.8. *Hoſ.* 13.14. 1 *Cor.* 15.54. So that we may triumphantly ſay, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that juſtifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* Nay the gracious beleiving ſouls may be perſwaded, that *neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate them from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus their Lord*, *Rom.* 8. and ſome of the laſt verſes thereof. Wilt thou not then fear this ſevere ſtroke of Gods viſitation. O get more of the blood of ſprinkling on thy ſoul, this ſpeaketh better things then the blood of *Abel.* The blood of the Paſchal Lamb was to be ſtrook

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on the two side posts, and on the upper doorpost of the houses of the children of *Israel*, when God did intend to smite the first-born in the land of *Egypt*, and execute his judgement against all the Egyptian gods, and saith the Lord, *When I see the the blood I will pass over you*, meaning the children of Israel, *and the Plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the Land of Egypt.* What did this typifie and hold forth, but Christ the true Passover or Paschal Lamb, whose blood besprinkling the conscience, cleanseth us from all sin, and delivereth us from the stroke of the destroying Angel, even from wrath to come, 1 *John* 1. 7. 1 *Thess.* 1.10.

See then that thou exercise thy self continually in that onely heaven upon earth, and sweetest sanctuary to a hunted, troubled ond afflicted soul, *The life of Faith*, in reference to thy *Salvation, Sanctification and Preservation.* As to thy *Salvation*; Let the truly-humbled soul, grieved and groaning under the heavy weight and burden of sin, throw it self into the meritorious and merciful arms of Jesus Christ, wounded, broken and bleeding upon the Cross, and there let it hold and hide it self for ever, in full assurance of eternal life, by vertue of that promise, *Joh.*3.36. *He that beleiveth on the Son hath everlasting life.*

2. As to thy *Sanctification*; If thou keep thy *Faith*, the fountain, root and heart, as it were, from which all thine other Graces spring, in life and vigour, thou wilt pray more comfortably, be more couragiously patient, hear the Word more faithfully, receive Christs Ordinance of Breaking bread more joyfully, spend the Lords day more delight-

delightfully, confer more chearfully, meditate more heavenly, and walk in all the ways of new obedience, with more ſtrength and conqueſt over corruptions. For ordinarily every one ſhall find the exerciſe of other graces, to be comfortable or cold, according to the livelineſs, or languiſhing of his faith.

3. As to thy *Preſervation* both temporal and ſpiritual; in croſſes, afflictions, and all Gods outward angry viſitation, let thy Faith be exerciſed in the power of ſuch Promiſes as the, *Pſa.* 89. 33: *and* 50. 15. *Heb.* 12. 6, 7. 8, 11. 1 *Theſ.* 3. 3. 1 *Tim.* 2. 11. *Act.* 14. 22. *Luk.* 9. 23. *Iſa.* 63. 9.

Secondly, Act Faith in the power, ability all-ſufficiency, and omnipotency of God. Power can do much, but omnipotency can do all, and is above all. He is able to do whatſoever he pleaſeth, *Pſa.* 115. 3. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* Job 9. 4. The Angels which excel in ſtrength are at his command, *Pſa.* 104. 4. and ſubject unto Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 3. 22. *The Devils apprehending the power of God, do tremble,* Jam. 2. 19. All the power that men and devils have, it is given them from above, *Joh.* 19. 11. And for other creatures, he ſaith to the *deep be dry*, *Iſa.* 44. 27. He commands the earth and it opens her mouth, *Num.* 16. 30, 31. The conſideration of whoſe mighty power, made the Pſalmiſt thus to break forth; *O Lord God of Hoſts, who is a ſtrong Lord, like unto thee, or to thy faithfulneſs round about thee? Thou ruleſt the raging of the Sea, when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them. Thou haſt broken Rahab in peices as one that*

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is ſlain, thou haſt ſcattered thine enemies with thy ſtrong arm; Thou haſt a mighty arm, ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand, Pſa. 89. 8, 9, 10, 13. *At his wrath the earth ſhall tremble, and the Nations ſhall not be able to abide his indignation*, Jer. 10. 10.

Beware then how we call into queſtion the power and all-ſufficiency of God; How we ſpeak againſt God; This was the ſin of the *Iſraelites*, and it was highly provoking unto the Lord. Its ſaid they ſpake againſt God and ſaid, *Can God furniſh a Table in the Wilderneſs? Behold he ſmote the rock, that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed, can he give bread alſo? can he provide fleſh for his people? therefore the Lord heard this, and was wrath*, Pſa. 88. 19, 20, 21. *Moſes* alſo, he falls expoſtulating the caſe with God. *The people amongſt whom I am* (ſaith he) *are ſix hundred thouſand footmen, and thou haſt ſaid, I will give them fleſh, that they may eat a whole moneth; Shall the Flocks and the Heards be ſlain for them, to ſuffice them? or ſhall all the Fiſh of the Sea be gathered together for them, to ſuffice them?* And what Argument does the Lord uſe to convince *Moſes* of his carnal, if not incredulous reaſonings, But this, *Is the Lords hand waxed ſhort?* thou ſhalt ſee now whether my word ſhall come to paſs unto thee or not, *Numb.* 11. 21, 22, 23. *And the Lord rained fleſh upon them as duſt, and feathered Fowles like as the ſand of the Sea*, though it was given as a great judgement unto them, *Pſa.* 88. 27. The ſame Argument does the Lord make uſe of, when he falls a reaſoning with his people the Jews, upon the account of their dereliction or rejecti-

rejection, and that they might yet have found ground of hope ſtill of their reſtauration, though they had ſold themſelves for their iniquities, and could not produce any Bill of Divorcement of the Lords putting of them away, in *Iſa.* 50. 2. *Is my hand ſhortned at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the Sea: I make the Rivers a Wilderneſs; their Fiſh ſtinckyth becauſe there is no water, and dieth for thirſt. I cloath the Heavens with blackneſs, and I make ſack-cloth their covering:* So *Iſa.* 59. 1. *Behold the Lords hand is not ſhortned, that it cannot ſave, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear;* Which may be an excellent ſupport to our faith. Let thy Faith then be exerciſed in the mighty power of God, in theſe following particular caſes and ſeaſons.

1. In times of great difficulties and ſtreights.
2. In times of ſore ſickneſſes.
3. In times of great ſinning.
4. In times of Worſhipping and Serving the Lord.
5. In times of great ſuffering for the Lord.

1. In times of great difficulties and ſtreights; Know that the ſame Almighty power, who could ſmite the Rock, and cauſe the waters to guſh out, and the ſtreams to overflow, can furniſh a table in the Wilderneſs, can give bread, and provide fleſh for his people. Take heed now of ſuch irrational, abſurd, and prepoſterous reaſonings; The Lord ſmote the Rock, and gave water in abundance, but can he now furniſh a table in the Wilderneſs? I remember the time when I was in great ſtreights, for bodily and ſoul refreſh-

refreshments; and the Lord smote the Rock in a strange, miraculous, and unexpected way, and the Waters gushed out, and the streams over-flowed; I had comfortable supplies for soul and body, and that in a plentiful manner. But can he now help me in my streights, and supply my necessities? now all conduit pipes are cut off, and all visible means of supplies and supports are taken away, Taxes are multiplied and increased, our Trade is gone, the Gentry gone, and such as gave life and being thereunto, have laid aside, and betook themselves to a retired life; many gone beyond the Seas, because they could not follow their callings, and be suffered to enjoy the freedom of their consciences too; God hath smitten some of my dear friends or relations, who were instruments in his hand of my comfortable sustentation and supportation, and now, my Wife, and Children, begin to stare me in the face, to sob and sigh, and I have not wherewith to releive them; The sight and thoughts of these things do even break my heart, and wound my very bowels within me; what shall I do? what course shall I take for a livelihood? Methinks I hear such doleful complaints among thousands destressed Families in the City at this time. Is it not a time and season then to be acting faith in the mighty power and providence of God? Surely it is an easie matter to trust God, when we have Meal in the Barrel, and Oyl in the Cruse, and Money in our Purse; but wilt thou trust God, and rely upon his power, in the want and absence of all; As the Prophet *Habakkuk*, when the Fig-tree did not blossom, nor fruit could

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be found in the Vines, when the labour of the Olive did fail, and the Field did yeild no meat, when the Flocks were cut off from the fold, and there were no Herd in the ſtall, when there was an utter conſumption and deprivation of all things; then to be rejoycing in the Lord, and joying in the God of our ſalvation. Then to ſay, the Lord is my ſtrength, and he will make me to walk on my high places. Then to ſay the Lord is my ſhepherd, I ſhall not want; as *David*, and though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me, *Pſal.* 22. then to live beleivingly, truſtingly, and dependingly upon God.

This is a high Act of Faith in the Power of God. And O that I could miniſter a word of ſupport unto thy ſoul in ſuch a condition: Well, be not faithleſs, but beleiving; live ſtill in the faith of the all-ſufficiency of God: That his hand is not ſhortned, that it cannot help; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; there's no diminution of his power, or is there any unwillingneſs in God to hear and help in a time of need: *Wherefore ſhould I fear in the days of evil* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *when the iniquity of my heels ſhall compaſs me about*, Pſal. 49. 5.

So ſay thou, thou poor, doubting, and diſponding ſoul. Why ſhould I fear in this evil day? why ſhould I diſtruſt that God, and doubt of his power and all-ſufficiency to help me now, who hath fed me, and cloathed me, and ſuſtained me all the days of my life? Why ſhould I not be caſting my care upon him, who hath not only promiſed,

but is able also to take care of me? 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. Why do I not cast my burden upon the Lord, who hath graciously promised (and he is able also) *to sustain me, and will never suffer the righteous to be moved*? Psal. 55. 22. This was a great stay and support to *Abrahams* faith, when God promised to make him a Father of may Nations; He considered not the deadness of his own body, being about 100. years old, nor the deadness of *Sarai's* womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbeleif, but was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Mark I pray you, he did not only beleive the promise, but the ability of God also, he fixt his faith in the power and all-sufficiency of God, *Rom.* 4. 19, 20, 21. He was assured, that God was as able, as he was faithful in the performance of his promise. God had said unto him, but a little before, *Abram, I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect*; and now *Abram* would not question it in the least, he knew his grace was all-sufficient for him, and that his strength could be perfected in his weakness.

As the Lord told *Paul* in another case, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. And has left it for ever upon record, as a most precious cordial of comfort, to refresh and support the most fainty, distressed, and disconsolate soul: To wit, *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them*; And that they may not think he wants power to perform what he hath promised (saith he) *I will open rivers in high places,*

and

and fountains in the midſt of the values: I will make the wilderneſs a pool of water, and the dry land ſprings of water, Iſa. 41. 17, 18, 19.

Surely, this promiſe is very applicable to poor, needy, thirſty, hungry ſouls, upon the accompt of temporal or ſpiritual refreſhment. And the Saints have beleived it: *Though I walk* (ſaith *David*) *in the midſt of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou wilt ſtretch forth thine hand againſt the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand ſhall ſave me*, Pſal. 138. 7. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the ſhaddow of death*, (though I ſhould be in the moſt dark, diſmal and uncomfortable condition) *yet I will fear no evil, thou art with me, thy preſence ſhall ſupport me, thy rod, and thy ſtaffe, they ſhall comfort me*, Pſal. 23. 4. *Though he ſlay me* (ſaith *Job*) *yet will I truſt in him: I will maintain mine own ways before him. He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation*, Job. 13. 15.

So when the enemies of God are high, and the Church of Chriſt very low. O this acting of faith in the power of God is of great uſe. *O God, how long ſhall the adverſary reproach, ſhall the enemy blaſpheme thy name for ever? Why withdraweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand* (and thats the hand of power and ſtrength ſurely) *pluck it out of thy boſome. For God is my King of old* (conſider it I prayyou) *working ſalvation in the midſt of the earth. Thou didſt divide the Sea by thy ſtrength: thou breakeſt the heads of the Dragons in the waters. Thou brakeſt the heads of Leviathan in peices, and gaveſt him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderneſs. Thou didſt clean the fountain and the floud: thou dridſt up mighty rivers*, Pſal. 74. 10, 11, 12,

13, 14, 15. What cannot the Lord do, when he hath a purpoſe to ſave his people, and to deſtroy his enemies? *Thy way, O God, is in the ſanctuary: who is ſo great a god as our God? Thou art the God that doſt wonders: thou haſt declared thy ſtrength among the people. Thou haſt with thine arm redeemed thy people, the Sons of* Jacob *and* Joſeph, *Pſal.* 77.13,14,15. *Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoyce in thee,* Pſal. 85. 6. This raiſed up the Churches hopes, in the ſtormy and tempeſtuous times of perſecution; and why? *The Lord reigneth, he is cloathed with majeſty, the Lord is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf,* &c. *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves.* What then? *The Lord on high is mightier then the noiſe of many waters; yea, then the mighty waves of the Sea.* And ſo ſaid *Jethro*, when *Moſes* had told him what the Lord had done unto *Pharoah*, and to the *Egyptians* for *Iſraels* ſake, and all the travel that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them. *Now I know* (ſaith he) *that the Lord is greater then all gods:* for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.

This is the Churches comfort, that though their enemies are high, and proud, and imperious, yet the Lord is above them, *Ezod.* 18. 8, 11. This was the Argument that good King *Jehoſophat* uſed in prayer with the Lord, when a great multitude of enemies came againſt him. *O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and ruleſt not thou over all the Kingdomes of the Heathen;*

Heathen; *and in thine hand is there not power and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? Art not thou our God, who didſt drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Iſrael, and gaveſt it to the ſeed of* Abraham *thy freind for ever? O our God, wilt not thou judge them? for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us: neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.* And the Lord did thereupon ſhew forth his mighty power, and that this great multitude was not able to withſtand him. For he ſet ambuſhments againſt the Child en of *Ammon*, *Moab*, and *Mount Seir*, that came againſt *Judah*, and they were ſmitten, and every one afterwards helped to deſtroy another, 2 *Chron.* 20.

O then be acting faith, in this great and powerful *Jehovah*, that he would make bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all the Nations; that all the ends of the earth, may ſee the ſalvation of our God, *Iſa.* 52. 10. Fear and tremble before him, whoſe mighty power hath limited, and bounded the proud and imperious waves of the Sea; that hitherto ſhall they come and no further, and here ſhall its proud waves be ſtayed, *Jeremiah* 5. 22. comp. with *Job* 37. 11. Fear him, that can caſt both body and ſoul into hell, *Matth.* 10. 28. It is he that makes the pillars of heaven to tremble, and to be aſtoniſhed at his reproof, *Job* 26. 11.

And learn to depend on this Almighty being for preſervation in all ſtreights and exigents whatſoever, who can preſerve without means, as *Elijah*, forty days and forty nights, 1 *King.* 19. 8. by ſtrange and miraculous means, even by the help

of Ravens that fed him, 1 *King.* 17. 4. by the ministery of Angels, *vers.* the 5. and the 6. of that 1 *King.* 19. *Chap.* By small means, as the widows meal in the barrel, and her little oyle in her cruse, 2 *King.* 17. 14. Against means, as *Daniel* in the Lions den, *Dan.* 6. 22. By ordinary means, wherein his powerful blessing is to be desired; else, we may eat, and not be satisfied, *Hag.* 1. 6. And let us praise him withal our strength for his almighty power, *Rev.* 4. 11. *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power. Thine O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory,* 1 *Chron.* 29. 11. And let us be speaking of his power, to make known to the Sons of men, his mighty acts, and the glorious Majesty of his Kingdom. *Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth throughout all generations.* And for the adversaries of the Lord, let them know, that they shall be broken to peices, and that out of heaven God shall thunder upon them, 1 *Sam.* 2. 10. And that his power, and his wrath is against all them that do evil, *Ezra* 8. 22. And let it be matter of consolation and encouragement in our prayers, that we call on that God, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly, above all that we ask or think, *Eph.* 3. 20. In our perseverance; That the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth who fainteth not, neither is weary, will renew our strength, that we shall run and not be weary, and walk, and not faint, *Isa.* 40. 31. Because he upholds us in our integrity, *Psal.* 41. 12. The Garrison that keeps us, is the power of God, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. And none can take us out of his hand, because he is greater then all, *Joh.* 10. 29.

In

In times of *Temptation*, For our ſtrength is in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Eph.* 6. 10. 'tis he that ſtrengthens us in the inward man. And when God ſhall help us with a little help, *Dan.* 11. 34. then our ſtrongeſt temptations ſhall not prevail, *but we ſhall be more then conquerors, through him that loved us*, Rom. 8. 37.

In times of *Affliction*, Know that he that is Almighty orders them for the kind, whether on our ſouls or bodies, names or eſtates, *Amos* 3. 6. For the meaſure, whether great or ſmall, *Jer.* 30. 11. The time, ſometimes but an evening; heavineſs may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the mourning, *Pſal.* 30. 6. Sometimes ten days, The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, *and ye ſhall have tribulation ten days*, Rev. 2. 10. Sometimes our ſorrows ſhall be for years, *Pſal.* 90. 15. Make us glad, according to the days wherein thou haſt afflicted us, and the years wherein we have ſeen evil.

He orders the *Deliverance*; there is an appointed time for that alſo. *Joſephs* feet muſt be hurt with fetters, and lye in irons, until the time that the word of the Lord came and tried him, and then the King ſends and looſeth him, and makes him Lord of his houſe, and Ruler of all his ſubſtance, *Pſal.* 105. 19, 20, 21. There is a time when the Priſoners ſhall be looſed out of their pit, and turn to their ſtrong hold, even the Priſoners of hope, *Zach.* 9. 10, 11.

Laſtly, what great conſolation doth this miniſter in reſpect of death; our bodies ſhall not always rot and conſume; we muſt awake and ſing, though we dwell in the duſt, *Iſa.* 26, 19. *And our*

vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body (even by the mighty and absolute power of Christ) *according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself*, Phil.3.21. All created powers being derived from him, and subordinate unto him, 1 *Chron.*29.12. and 2 *Chron.*14.11.

2. Act faith in the mighty power of God, and that in times of sickness, and of this sore visitation of the Lord. Know that this is the Lords prerogative royal, to kill and to make alive, to bring down to the grave and to bring up again, 1 *Sam.*2.6. This the Lord challengeth, as his own sovereign, peculiar right, *I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me; I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* Deut. 32.39. In *Psal.*90.1,2,3 Saith the Church there, *Lord thou hast bin our dwelling place in all generations, Before the mountains were brought forth*, &c. *even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* And what follows? *Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayst, Return ye children of men.* The consideration of this mighty power and the Churches acting faith in the same, did put her upon pious thoughts of returning unto the Lord; *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.* And what follows? *After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight*, Hos.6.1,2.

Consider then in the first place, whoever thou art, that art thus under the chastising hand of God, that affliction commeth not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man

is

is born unto trouble, as the ſparks flye upward, *Job* 5. 6, 7. But if ſores and ſickneſs comes not forth of the duſt, from whence come they then? Surely, from the powerful immediate overruling hand of God. So ſaid *Eliphaz*, *Job* 17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty: For, he maketh ſore and bindeth up, he woundeth and his hands make whole.* So *Job* himſelf acknowledged, ch. 10. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* So *David*, *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore*, Pſal. 38. 2. And conſider, that as a ſparrow falls not to the ground without Gods providence, ſo the *Plague* and *Peſtilence*, and all other Sickneſſes and diſeaſes are guided by his own immediate hand, and he onely doth ſmite when and whom he pleaſeth; and know, that the ſame Powerful hand that took away thy health, can in a moment take away thy breath, and then thou dieſt and returneſt unto thy duſt, *Pſal.* 104. 29. This ſhould make thee lye down patiently at the foot of God, and with all willing and chearful reſignation of ſpirit, with good old *Ely*, ſay, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. And with *Job*, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil*, Job 2. 10. But whatever affliction he layeth upon thy loins, or what ſtrokes ſoever upon any of thy deareſt relations, ſee that thou murmur not, nor charge the Lord fooliſhly or unjuſtly; ſay not with the King of *Iſrael*, *Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what ſhould I wait for the Lord any longer?* 2 King. 6. *ult.*

2. Let

2ly. Let the ſence of the mighty hand of God which is upon thee, humble thee deeply; So ſays *Peter, Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time,* 1 Pet. 5. 6. This will evidence it ſelf inwardly in a ſight and ſence of thine own great unworthineſs, in an abhorring thy ſelf in duſt and aſhes, and loathing thy ſelf for all thy abominations, in a tender ſenſe of temptations either in thy ſelf or others, in a hatred of Hypocriſie, a willingneſs to ſuffer affliction, and a contentation in ſome meaſure to the will of God, in what eſtate ſoever it ſhall pleaſe God to bring thee to. Outwardly towards God, it will keep thee lowly in the uſe of means, and in a continual fear and awfulneſs of Gods preſence, not caring to be counted vile for the ſervice of God. And in carriage towards men, it is ſuch a grace as is not affected in words or geſtures, nor is it cenſorious, arrogant or contentious, but makes a man go before in giving honour, and not to think much to equal himſelf with them of the lower ſort. This is the time now to be narrowly ſearching into thine own heart and mourn under it, and bewailing now thy want of love unto the Lord, and thy abounding love to ſin; do thou cover with ſorrowing, what breach thou haſt made with ſinning; and remember, *That had thy ſin never been ſo ſweet, then thy ſorrow had never been ſo bitter.* And know that God is now awaking thee from all thy ſecure ſleeps, that every minutes breathing he lends thee more, may be ſpent in preparing to meet Jeſus Chriſt at the Judgement of the great Day; which that thou mayſt effectually do with all thy might, with fear and trembling, as before the

Lord

Lord, remember that the next ſtep (from this life) thou takeſt is into eternity.

3ly. Thus waiting till thy change come, Be further in the exerciſe of Faith in the power of thy mighty Redeemer, as to a glorious reſurrection of thy body, when laid aſleep in the grave; *Knowing that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe up thee alſo by Jeſus*, 2 Cor. 4. 14. *and then this corruptible ſhall put on incorruption, and then this mortal ſhall put on immortality, and death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory*, 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.

3. Act Faith in the mighty power of God in times of great ſinning, and prophanation of the name of God: So *Jeremy* ſpeaking of the cuſtoms of the people that they are vain, and of their Idol-gods, that they are altogether bruitiſh and fooliſh; and the ſtock is a doctrine of vanities; he ſets the great and mighty *Jehovah* againſt all their Heathenish gods; *Foraſmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations?* Jer. 10. 6, 7. So in the 10. verſe. *But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlaſting King: At his wrath the earth ſhall tremble, and the Nations ſhall not be able to abide his indignation.*

So the Prophet *Habakkuk*, he ſets Faith on work in the mighty power of God, in a time of great ſinning, and of treacherous and cruel dealing. *Art thou not from everlaſting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we ſhall not dye: O Lord thou haſt ordained them for judgement, and O mighty God, thou haſt eſtabliſhed them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not*

look

look on iniquity. Wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he?

Think upon the mighty power of God, when men grow bold and impudent in ſinning, do they oppreſs the poor, and cruſh the needy, *Amos* 4.1 Know that this mighty God can ſoon cruſh them under his feet, *Lament.* 3. 34. and feed them that oppreſs thee with their own fleſh, and then they ſhall know the Lord to be the mighty one of *Iſrael*, *Iſa.*49.26.

Does the horrible impieties and wickdneſs of men greive and wound thy heart; Know, that he that is thy God is the God of ſalvation, and he ſhall wound the head of his enemies; and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch a one as goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſs, *Pſalm* 68. 20, 21, verſes. And what ſays *Solomon*; *If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of Judgement and Juſtice in a Province, Marvaile not at the matter: For he that is higher then the higheſt regardeth; and there be higher then they*, Eccleſ. 5. 8.

4. Act faith in the mighty power of God, as in times of great ſinning, ſo in times of ſerving and worſhipping of God. So did *Daniel*, when *Nebuchadnezzar* the King had made an Image of gold, and ſet it up to be worſhipped, and that whoſo fell not down and worſhipped the ſaid Image ſhould be caſt into the midſt of a burning fiery furnace: *And who is that God* (ſaith he moſt blaſphemouſly) *that ſhall deliver out of my hand?* What ſaid *Sadrach*, *Meſhach* and *Abednego*. *O*

Nebu-

Nebuchadnezzar, *we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.* They served God, and they knew that God was able and of power sufficient to protect them in the service of him, *Dan.* 3. 1, 11, 16, 17. To this purpose, when our dear Lord would encourage his Apostles, and the subsequent Ministers of the Gospel, to be faithful in the execution of his commands, and the trust committed unto them; He tells them, *that all power was committed unto him in Heaven and in Earth. And therefore go teach all Nations, and Baptise them, &c. And teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and loe I am with you allway, even unto the end of the World*, Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. As if he had said, Do you faithfully and courageously execute the Commission I have given you, and be assured, you shall never want my all-sufficient power and presence to support you. I will make all the power I have in heaven and earth, concurring in a way of serviceableness unto you.

O come, let us sing unto the Lord, saith the Psalmist, *let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.* Shall we fear to serve that God who is the Rock of our Salvation? *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, &c.* Why? *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods; in his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also; the sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.* If the Lord whom we serve is so great a God, so great

great a King above all Gods, above all Angels, Princes, and Potentates of the World, and above all that is called God; O then with what thankfulneſs and chearfulneſs of ſpirit ſhould we come into his preſence! *O come let us Worſhip and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*; Why? *for he is our God, and we are the people of his paſture, and the ſheep of his hands, whom he makes to lye down in green Paſtures, and leadeth beſides the ſtill waters*, Pſa. 95. 1, to 7. So in *Pſa.* 96. 6. it is ſaid, *Honour and Majeſty are before him, ſtrength and beauty are in his ſanctuary*; Where is the beauty of Gods face ſeen, and his power and ſtrength diſplayed, as in his Sanctuary? to wit, his Tabernacle, his Temple, the Congregations and Aſſemblies of his Saints. *God is greatly to be feared in the Aſſembly of the Saints: and to be had in reverence by all them that are about him*: and why? why? *who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the Sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* Pſa. 89. 6, 7. And therefore it is, that the Lord hath ſpoken, ſaying, *I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me*, Lev. 10. 3. When a fire went out from the Lord, and deſtroyed *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Sons of *Aaron*, for offering ſtrange fire before the Lord, *Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3. To which I ſuppoſe that place in the *Hebrews* hath a ſpecial reference, where the Saints being exhorted to ſerve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, urges this as a ſtrong motive thereunto, for our God (ſaith he) *is a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12. 28, 29. Thus you ſee how requiſite it is to be acting Faith in the power and ſoveraignty of God, when we

draw

draw nigh to him in the ſolemn duties of his Worſhip and ſervice; and what an encouragement it is, to be fearing the Lord, and ſerving of him in ſincerity and truth, with all our hearts, conſidering what great things he hath done for us, 1 *Sam.* 12. 24.

5. Act faith in the mighty power of God in times of ſuffering. So the Apoſtle *James*, ſpeaking of the cruelties that were exerciſed againſt the Saints in thoſe days, how they had condemned and killed the juſt, and they could not reſiſt them; He exhorts them to be patient to the coming of the Lord; and why to the coming of the Lord? Becauſe when he comes, *he will come with power and great glory*, Mat. 24. 30. When he comes, hee'l take to him his great power and reign, *Rev.* 11. 17. When he comes, he will come *with ten thouſand of his Saints*; What to do? *To execute Judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, &c.* Jude, verſ. 14, 15. When he comes, he will come *with fire, and with his chariots, like a Whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire*, Iſa. 66. 15. When he comes, he will come *with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and ſave you*, Iſa. 35. 4. *And then the hand of the Lord*, (the power of God) *ſhall be known towards his ſervants, and his indignation towards his enemies*, Iſa. 66. 14. So the Author to the Hebrews, when he exhorts the Saints to a patient ſuffering and undergoing of the Croſs of Chriſt; what Argument does he uſe?

uſe? even this, *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. The Apoſtle would have all the ſuffering Saints to be acting faith in a powerful Redeemer, even in him who is mighty to ſave, *That will tread down the people in his anger, and make them drunk in his fury, and will bring down their ſtrength to the earth*, Iſa 63. 6. So the Apoſtles, (when the Prieſts and Rulers of the people had laid hands on them, and put them in hold, for teaching the People, and Preaching through Jeſus the reſurrection from the dead, and had further threatned them for ſpeaking any more in the name of Jeſus, and had let them go) what Arguments in Prayer do they uſe? *Lord thou art God, which haſt made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all that in them is. Who by the mouth of thy ſervant* David, *haſt ſaid, Why did the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The Kings of the Earth ſtood up, and the Rulers were gathered together againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt. For of a truth againſt thy holy Child Jeſus, whom thou haſt anointed, both* Herod *and* Pontius Pilate, *with the Gentiles, and the people of* Iſrael, *were gathered together, for to do whatſoever thy hand, and thy counſel determined before to be done. And now Lord behold their threatnings*, Act. 4. Though they had to deal with great and potent Adverſaries, yet they well knew, that God was above them, and that their rage and fury was not ſo much againſt them, as againſt the Lord *Jehovah* himſelf, and againſt his Chriſt, whom he had anointed to be the chief Prieſt, and Prophet, and King of his Church, who could eaſily break them with his

his rod of Iron, and dash them in peices like a Potters Vessel. They knew that the Lord whom they served, was able to deliver them, as *Daniel* out of the Lions mouths. So it is said of *Moses*, and laid down as a singular act of Faith in him, *that he forsook* Egypt, *and feared not the wrath of the King, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible*, Heb. 11. 27. Now this was an act of Faith in the power of God. He knew, that though he might incur the wrath of an enraged King by refusing the honours and dignities of his Court; yet his eye being fixt upon a most powerful invisible Lord God, that was sufficient to uphold him under all the sufferings he might undergo for his sake. And that this Lord was able to strike through Kings in the day of his wrath, *Psa.* 110. 5. In which spirit of faith and confidence *David* brake forth, when he said, *Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me*, Psa. 138. 7. So *Paul* that tried Apostle, and courageous sufferer for Christ; *For which cause* (saith he) *I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have beleived, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. He acts faith in the ability and all-sufficiency of God, to carry him through all difficulties and hardship for Christ*, 2 Tim 1. 12. And upon this score it was, he so much incouraged his Son *Timothy* in the faith, as to a suffering state for Christ. *Be not therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of me his Prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the*

Gospel according to the power of God, as in the 8. *vers.* of that *Chap.* Whether he meant Christ the power of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. Or whether he would have him bear those afflictions patiently, as God afforded him power and strength; yet surely, it cannot exclude, but take in the exercise of his faith in the power of God, in all his sufferings for Christ, whose power will ever be manifested in weakness. And therefore it is, that we are exhorted to be looking up unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, at the right hand of Gods power. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Now this looking up unto Jesus, is not only a looking up unto him as a pattern and example of patience, in our sufferings and persecutions, for his and the Gospels sake; but we must look upon him also, as made perfect by suffering, who for the suffering of death is now crowned with glory and honor; as him, whom God hath highly exalted, and set at the right hand of the throne of God, where he must sit and reign till all his enemies be made his foot-stool, or as the Apostle expresseth it, *Till he hath put all his enemies under his feet*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25 Thus you see how necessary it is to be Acting faith, as in the blood of Christ, so in the power of God.

And that First, In times of great difficulties and straights.

2. In times of sore sicknesses and deaths.

3. In

3. In times of great sinning.
4. In times of serving and worshipping of God.
5. In times of suffering for God.

Thirdly, We are to Act Faith in the faithfulness of God. *Know therefore* (saith *Moses*) *that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy, with them that love him, and keep his commandments to a thousand generations*, Deut. 7. 9. The consideration whereof, made the *Psalmist* break forth into this pious interrogation or expostulation rather, *Psal.* 89. 8. *O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?*

Consider then that this Faith in the faithfulness of God is to be acted upon several accounts.

First, Upon the account of the unchangableness of Gods love, and the immutability of the Covenant of Grace, which he hath made with us in his Son, and which he hath ratified and confirmed unto us in his most precious blood. See the 89. *Psalm*, speaking of *David* as a Type of Christ, The Lord promiseth there, *That the enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him; And that he will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness* (saith he) *and my mercies shall be with him*, Ver. 22, 23, 24. So in the 30, 31, 32, 33, *and* 34. *Vers.* of that Psalm. *If his Children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments. If they break my statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.* But what follows? *Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the*

thing that is gone out of my lips. So *David* in the 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.* Now that Gods love in Christ is unchangable, as it is founded upon the immutability of the New-covenant of Grace, appears.

1. Because it is dearer then a Mothers love to her sweetest, and most tender Babe, *Isa.* 49. 15. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.*

2. It is stronger then the Mountains, *Isa.* 54. 10. *For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.*

3. It is as constant as the courses of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, of the Day, and of the Night, *Jer.* 31. 35, 36. *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon, and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar, the Lord of Hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of* Israel *also shall cease from being a Nation before me for ever.*

4. It is as sure as God himself, *Psal.* 89. 35. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lye unto* David. *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the Moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.* We give much credit to the word of an honest man, much more when we have his oath for it. This the Author to the *Hebrews* makes the ground or foun-

foundation of a Beleivers ſtrong conſolation. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath, That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lye we might have a ſtrong conſolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, &c. *Heb.* 6. 17, 18, 19. And this was it without all queſtion, that made the Apoſtle break out with that holy boldneſs, and exultation of ſpirit. *Who ſhall ſeperate us from the love of Chriſt, ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Nay, in all theſe things we are more then Conquerors through him that loved us. For I am perſwaded* (ſaith he) *that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeperate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 35. to the end. Now this ſtability, and firmneſs of Gods love, grounded upon the faithfulneſs of God, may be a great ſupport to the poor doubting ſoul, that is apt to queſtion the Love of God, and the certainty of its eternal eſtate in Chriſt.

2ly. This Faith in Gods faithfulneſs, is to be acted upon the account of our Vocation or Calling to, and confirmation or eſtabliſhment in the Grace of God. *God is faithful* (ſaith *Paul*) *by whom ye were called unto the fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: And therefore will he confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameleſs in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9. That God who

hath called you unto the communion, or fellowſhip of his Son; not externally only, in point of Ordinances, Church-fellowſhip, and Publique-worſhip, whereby we profeſs to have communion with Chriſt, and his benefits; but internally in a ſpecial manner, whereby we are really united to him by faith, and by the ſpirit of Chriſt, and ſo are made partakers indeed of all the glorious benefits, priviledges, and advantages of his death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, interceſſion, *Rom.* 8. 32. *Eph.* 3. 17. 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. This God who hath ſo called you, is the faithful God, faithful in the performance of all his promiſes he hath made, to confirm you unto the end, not to leave you, nor forſake you, *Heb.* 13. 5. as many freinds do in time of adverſity; not to caſt you off, *Rom.* 11. 1, 2. as many Parents do their Children; not to forget you, as many cruel and unnatural Women do their ſucking children, *Iſa.* 49. 15.

No ſurely, he will not do it, his faithfulneſs is engaged to ſtand by you; fear not, he will be with thee: be not diſmayed, he is thy God; he will ſtrengthen thee, yea, he will help thee, yea, *He will uphold thee with the right hand of his righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 41. 10. *And make an everlaſting Covenant with thee, that he will not turn away from thee to do thee good, but will put his fear into thy heart, that thou ſhalt not depart from him*, Jer. 32. 40. So the Apoſtle *Paul* praying for the *Theſſalonians*, that the very God of peace migh ſanctifie them wholly, and that their whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body, might be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: He makes this the ground of his confidence, *Faithful is he that calleth*

you

you, who also will do it, 1 Thess. 5. 23, 24. So 2 Thess. 3. 3. *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and keep you from evil.* Why shouldst thou then fear of falling away, or of thy persevering in the grace of God, when Gods faithfulness is engaged for thy establishment?

3ly. This faith in Gods faithfulness is to be acted upon the accompt of a Christians temptations and conflictings with sin and Satan, 1 *Cor.* 10 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful* (observe that I pray you) *who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Thou poor tempted soul, thou thinkest perhaps, that no temptations are like unto thine, but thou art mistaken, thy temptations are not singular, but in common with others, other men have been exercised with the like. And thou art apt to think, thou shalt sink under thy temptations, thou findest so little strength to undergo them, but what saith the Apostle, *God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength*, but will proportion suitable strength, according to your trials. Gods Faithfulness is engaged to help you and to support you under all your temptations and trials. Would Satan then make thee beleive that thy sins are of that nature and magnitude that they shall not be forgiven, think upon Gods faithfulness then who is engaged to pardon thee. So saith *John*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* It would be an act of unfaithfulness and injustice

in God, if he should not pardon and forgive poor penitent sinners who confess and forsake their sins. But God is faithful and just, and cannot falsifie his word; *If we beleive not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. 2. 13.

4. This acting of faith in Gods faithfulness is of excellent use in order to our standing fast in the faith, and continuing in our publique faithful testimony for the Lord, *Heb.* 10.23. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering* (and why?) *for he is faithful that hath promised*, faithful in performing what he hath promised, *Josh.* 23.14. And what hath he promised? Surely, as hath been declared before, *to establish and keep us from evil, and confirm us unto the end*, 1 Cor. 1.8. According to that also in 2 *Thess.* 3. 3. *But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil:* Stablish you in the faith, lest you fall from it; and keep you from evil, to wit, the Devil, lest he subvert your faith by evil men, as the instruments of his art; or it may be taken more generally, for any evil; as the Apostle declares in the 2 *Tim.* 4.18. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom.* And therefore we may upon this consideration be much encouraged to hold fast our profession, and not to be staggaring or wavering in our honourable and faithful testimony for the Lord.

5. This acting of faith in Gods faithfulness is of excellent use to encourage us as to a suffering state for Christ, and to Christian contentation under the Cross. *It is a faithful saying* (saith the Apostle)

Apoſtle) *that if we be dead with him, we ſhall alſo live with him; If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Rule or reign as Kings, ſo the word it ſeems imports, if we endure all manner of tribulations with patience and ſtedfaſtneſs in the faith. And *it is a faithful ſaying* (ſaith he) a certain, ſure, firm, credible, irrevocable word, not to be queſtioned or doubted. Or we ſhall be glorified together with him, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *Rom.* 8. 17. and Gods faithfulneſs is engaged to make it good; whence is that exhortation of the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 4. 16, 19. In the 16. verſe he tells them, *That if any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian* (and not as an evil doer) *let him not be aſhamed* (ſaith he) *but let him glorifie God on this behalf*. And then in the 19. verſe. *Wherefore let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*. God is not onely a powerful Creator, but alſo a faithful Creator, a ſure Preſerver, who will faithfully recompenſe all your hard ſervices and ſufferings you undergo for his ſake.

He is as faithful as he is able; according to that of *Paul* to *Timothy*, encouraging him to be a partaker of the afflictions of the Goſpel, and ſpeaking of his own ſufferings upon the ſame account; *Nevertheleſs* (ſaith he) *I am not aſhamed, for I know whom I have beleived, and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day*, 2 Tim. 1. 12. And what was that which he had committed to Gods cuſtody? His Soul, ſaith one; himſelf (which is all one) ſaith another; his works, ſaith a third; a fourth ſaith

his

his sufferings; a fifth his salvation. All which put together, he committed unto God his soul, himself, his doings, his sufferings, his salvation, his all.

And he was perswaded he was as able as faithful, and as faithful as able to keep that which he had committed unto his trust: The Gospel that the Lord had committed to his keeping, and his Soul he had committed unto Gods keeping: And because the Apostle *Peter* knew that God was a faithful Creator, therefore did he encourage the Saints suffering according to the will of God, to commit the custody of their souls unto him; who as he had created them immortal souls, so he would not leave them as Masons and Carpenters leave their houses which they build, but would faithfully keep and and preserve them. As the Lord himself declares, speaking of his Vineyard of red wine, his Church, whether red, upon the account of the preciousness of its fruits, or else of its bloody sufferings, *I the Lord do keep it* (saith he) *I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day*, Isa.27.2,3.

Fourthly and lastly, We are to act faith in the Promises of God, whether they are such as are of a temporal or of a spiritual and eternal concernment; and know for thine everlasting comfort, thou beleiving Soul, that as the promises of God are the ground of our hope, and the object of our faith, *Psal.* 119.49. *Heb.*10.35.36. and chap. 11.11. So are they all firm and irrevocable in Christ; *For all the promises of God in him* (that is in Christ) *are yea, and in him*

him are Amen, unto the glory of God, &c. 2 Cor. 1.20. They are not yea and nay, but in Chriſt they are yea; that is, true in the event, and as to their performance: And *Amen*, that is ſtable and firm, being made and performed in and for Chriſt.

For even as Chriſt is always the ſame in Gods promiſes which are unchangeable, ſo are all Gods promiſes of our ſalvation firm and certain in Chriſt: and as certain, ſo are they general and indefinite, and made to all that ſhall beleive, excluding none but thoſe that are finally impenitent. Conſider a few of them to this purpoſe; *Hoe every one that thirſteth, Come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, Come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear and your ſouls ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David, Iſa.55.1,3. So *Matth.* 11.28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you reſt.* Mark 16.16. *He that beleiveth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that beleiveth not ſhall be damned.* 1 Joh. 2.1. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours onely, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* Joh.3.16. *God ſo loved the world that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever beleiveth in him, ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life.*

Joh.5.24. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you; He that heareth my word, and beleiveth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.* Joh. 6.37.

6.37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, & him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*, v. 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and beleiveth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day*, vers. 47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that beleiveth on me hath everlasting life*, Act 40. 43. *To him* (meaning Christ) *give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever beleiveth in him, shall receive remission of sins*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners, of whom I am chief*, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, *Isa.* 43. 25. *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* So Chap. 44. 22. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee*, Heb 8. 8. *Behold the days come (saith the Lord) when I shall make a new Covenant with the house of* Israel, *and with the house of* Judah, *For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of* Israel, *after those days (saith the Lord) I will put my Laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people*, and in the 12. verse, *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more.* These are some of those sweet soul-supporting promises, which are made indefinitely to all, and have their, yea, and Amen in Christ, excluding none, but the wilful and final impenitent, and unbeleiving sinners. But perhaps thou wilt say, thou hast relapsed and fallen into sin again, after repentance, and

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thou thinkeſt thy relapſes cannot be pardoned. Remember that men who have not a drop of mercy, in compariſon of God, are obliged to forgive the repenting offender, though he offend ſeventy ſeven times; God much more, who is infinite in mercy, hath bound himſelf, by his moſt firme and faithful promiſes, 1 *Joh.* 1.9. *and* 2.1. Upon true and renewed repentance, often to forgive and forget the ſame ſin, iterated again and again, *Luk.* 17.3,4. *That though thy ſins were as Crimſon, they ſhall be made as white as Snow*; And he calls to back ſliding *Iſrael* to return, and promiſes to heal their back-ſlidings, and love them freely, *Jerem.* 3.14. comp. with *Hoſea* 14.4.

So in pangs of the New-birth, ſpiritual infancy, weakneſs of Faith, Prayer, Godly ſorrow, and other graces, let ſuch cordial refreſhing Promiſes, as theſe dwell upon thy heart, *Rev.* 21.6. *Mat.* 5.6. *Iſa.* 42.3. *and* 57.15. *and* 40.11. which import; How God will ſatisfie the hungry ſoul, tender the weak and feeble ſoul, dwel with the humble ſoul; yea the exerciſe of faith alſo in the promiſes is of ſingular uſe in all kinds and varieties of temptations, ſpiritual deſertions, deep & almoſt deſpairing apprehenſions of thine extreme vileneſs and nothingneſs in grace, in which dark, diſmal and diſconſolate eſtate, let thy faith be exerciſed on ſuch precious ſoul-ſupporting promiſes as theſe, 1 *Cor.* 10.13. *Jam.* 1.2. *Iſa.* 30.18. and *Iſa.* 43.25. Which ſpeaks to this effect; *That God is faithful, and will not ſuffer us to be tempted above our ſtrength. That we ſhould count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. That all they are bleſſed that wait for the Lord.* So that if thou dieſt

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in this waiting ſtate, thou ſhalt be certainly ſaved, for the holy ſpirit pronounceth thee bleſſed. And further, for the exceeding great comfort and ſupport of thy ſoul, that, *it is the Lord, and he onely that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for his own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.*

So in the Hail-ſtorms of ſlanderous Arrows, and empoyſoned Darts of diſgrace, how ſhould thy Faith be fixt upon ſuch pretious Promiſes as theſe, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. *Mat.* 5. 11. Yea, in the valley of the ſhadow of death, by an aſſurance of Gods merciful omnipotent preſence, *Pſa.* 23. 4. And in the extremity and depth of ſuch deſperate diſtreſſes and perplexities, wherein in thy preſent feeling, thou canſt ſee and find no poſſibility of help from Heaven or Earth, God or man, but art both helpleſs and hopeleſs, as the Church complains, *Lam.* 3. 18. Let thy meditations dwell upon ſuch like precious promiſes as theſe, *Iſa.* 33. 9, 10. 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *Exod.* 14. 13. *Pſal.* 78. 65, 66. *Gen.* 22. 14. All which import, that in the Mount of the greateſt difficulties, God will be ſeen. Well, in every thing, or any thing that ſhall or can poſſibly befall thee, proſperity or poverty, croſs or comfort, calmneſs of conſcience, or tempeſts of terfor, life or death, thou maiſt by Faith extract abundance of unconquerable patience and peace of ſoul, from thoſe three heavenly golden conduits of ſweeteſt comfort, *Rom.* 8. 18. *and* 28. 32. to wit, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us.*

2. *That all things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.*

3. *That*

3. *That he that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?*

Object. *But may I act faith in the Promiſes for things temporal, as for ſpiritual?* Yea, *for godlineſs hath the Promiſe of the life that now is, as of that which is to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Yet conſider withal, that temporal things are not promiſed abſolutely, but conditionally.

1. With limitation to expediency.

2. By way of commutation and compenſation with ſpiritual; If he gives thee not peace, he will give thee patience, if not wealth, yet contentment, which may be far better.

3. With exception of the Croſs, Houſes, and Brethren, and Siſters, and Lands with perſecution, *Mark* 10. 30. So then we may believe, we ſhall have temporal bleſſings, which God hath promiſed conditionally, ſo far forth as will ſtand with theſe conditions, his own glory, our ſpiritual good, and everlaſting ſalvation. This life, is but, *via advitam*, the way to life, and whatſoever God promiſeth us in the way, is, but to help us to the end of our journey. There is no temporal thing of this life falls within the compaſs of Gods promiſe, but ſo far forth as it ſhall be a help and furtherance unto us, as to our eternal life. I ſhall therefore preſent unto thy view, a few of thoſe Promiſes, which are of a temporal concernment, as having reference to long Life, Children, Lands, Riches, Honour, and external Peace and Plenty; See to this purpoſe, *Gen.* 22. 17. *and* 49. 15. *Lev.* 25. 18, 19, 21. *and* 26. 4, 5, 6, *&c. Deut.* 5. 16. *and* 28. 4, 11, 13. *Pſa.* 112, 3. *and* 128.

128. 2, 3, 4. and many ſuch like, which are propounded upon the diligent and exact obſervation of Gods Law, and the fear of the Lord. So for the duties and works of thy particular calling, which if by prayer thou doſt conſcienciouſly and diligently diſcharge, thou mayeſt go on with comfort, contentment, and freedom from carking cares, and racking, torturing, thoughtfulneſs, and leave the ſucceſs, iſſue, and event of all thy labours and undertakings, unto the Lord, whatſoever it may be, reſting ſweetly, and ever relying upon this gratious promiſe, *Heb.* 13. 5. *I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee.* The like in ordering and guiding the affairs of thy Family, depend by faith upon Gods bleſſing, the ſtrength and ſinew of all ſound comfort, and true contentation that way, *Pſa.* 127. So, in the loſs of outward things, for thy love and ſervice unto God, by beleiving that Man of God, 2 *Chron.* 25. 9. *The Lord is able to give thee much more then this*; yea, in the loſs of all earthly things in every kind, by applying that promiſe in *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. And that of *Jobs* patient bleſſing of *God* upon the ſurpriſe of all his ſubſtance, and the concurrence of an univerſal miſery, ſhould not paſs without a ſerious conſideration, if God ſhould exerciſe thee with the like condition, *Job* 1. 21.

But I ſhall forbear to enlarge further, and recommend to thy conſideration ſome of thoſe promiſes for thy faith to be exerciſed in, which have a ſpecial relation as to the preſent viſitation of the Lord, as Exod. 23. 5. *Ye ſhall ſerve the Lord your God, &c. And I will take ſickneſs away from the*

the midſt of thee; So *Deut.* 7. 12, 15. *If ye hearken to theſe judgements, and keep and do them, the Lord thy God ſhall keep unto thee the Covenant and the mercy which he ſware unto thy Fathers*; *And he will love thee and bleſs thee, and multiply thee.* And in the 15. verſ. *The Lord will take away from thee all ſickneſs, and will put none of the evil diſeaſes of* Egypt *upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.* So in the Prayer that *Solomon* made, at the Feaſt of the Dedication of the Temple, 1 *King.* 8. 37, 38, 39. *If there be in the Land Famine, if there be Peſtilence, &c. Whatſoever Plague, whatſoever ſickneſs there be, what prayer and ſupplication ſoever be made by any man, which ſhall know the plague of his own heart*; *Then hear thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whoſe heart thou knoweſt*; And the Lord graciouſly promiſed, that he would do according to his prayer and ſupplication that he had made, 1 *King* 9. 3. So *Pſa.* 41. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preſerve him and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing, thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs*; So Pſa. 91. 3, 6, 7, 10. *Surely, he ſhall deliver thee from the noyſom Peſtilence, Thou ſhalt not be afraid of the Peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs: nor for the deſtruction that waſteth at noonday: A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee.* Art thou ſick then? apply; *The Lord*

will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. Art thou there where the sick are? apply; *I will take away all sickness from the midst of thee.* Feareſt thou the Peſtilence? *I will deliver thee, ſaith the Lord, from the noyſome Peſtilence.* So that of *Eliphaz* to *Job*; *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven, there ſhall no evil touch thee; in Famine he ſhall redeem thee from death, and in War from the power of the Sword. Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the Tongue, neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction when it cometh, &c. And thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace,* Job 5. 19. 20, 21, 24. So in *Iſa.* 43. 2. The Lord promiſeth he will be with us in the fire, and in the water, the waters ſhall not overflow us, nor the fire devour us; And in *Heb.* 13. 5. he hath promiſed likewiſe, that he will never leave thee nor forſake thee; The labour of the Olive may fail, as *Habakkuk* ſpeaks; our neareſt and deareſt friends and relations may fail, our eyes may fail, our tongue may fail, our ſtrength may fail, our fleſh and heart may fail, our ſpirits may fail; yet ſaith the Lord, *I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forſake thee; When the poor and the needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of* Iſrael *will not forſake them*, Iſa. 41. 17. What can be more refreſhing and ſupporting to the poor languiſhing fainting, ſinking ſoul? Thus in any trouble of ſoul, body, good name, outward ſtate, preſent or to come, thou maiſt by the ſoveraign power of faith, working upon the word of his promiſe,

nor

not only draw out the ſting, and expell the poiſon of it; but alſo procure a great deal of comfort to thy truly humbled ſoul, and maintain it in deſpight of all mortal or infernal oppoſition, in a conſtant ſpiritual gladneſs. Conſidering, that all thoſe Promiſes whereupon thy heavy and diſconſolate heart in ſuch caſes may repoſe and refreſh it ſelf, have their being and confirmation from the bleſſed name *Jehovah* it ſelf, ſee *Exod* 6. 3. and therefore as ſure as God himſelf; they are ſealed with the bloody ſufferrings of his only Son, and therefore as true as Truth it ſelf; and if thou art in Chriſt, are all as certainly thine, as the heart in thy body, or blood that runs in thy veins. Nay, and a little more for thy comfort, the glory of Gods Truth is mightily advanced, and himſelf extraordinarily pleaſed, by thy more reſolute, ſtedfaſt and triumphant cleaving unto them. What a bleſſed, ſweet and heavenly life then is the Life of Faith, as it is exerciſed in the Promiſes of God?

O then be encouraged to be acting Faith in the Promiſes, and to be ſtoring up a good ſtock of Promiſes every day. They are of excellent uſe in all eſtates, in all conditions, in all kind of diſtreſſes whatſoever. By beleiving the Promiſes we ſhall proſper, by beleiving and applying of them, we ſhall come to participate of the Divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. And therefore they are called exceeding great and precious promiſes, *That by theſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *you might be partakers of the Divine Nature*; not of the ſubſtance, but of the quality. *Non transformatione naturæ humanæ in divinam, ſed participatione donorum, quibus conformes efficimur divinæ naturæ*, as one diſtinguiſheth very

well; not by the transformation of the humane nature into the divine, but by the participation of gifts whereby we are made conformable to the Divine Nature. And so it notes a fellowship with God in his holiness, and a fellowship with God in his blessedness, that is, in the beatifical vision and brightness of glory; upon which account, as to the excellent use and nature of them, one terms them a Christians *Catholicon*, a general purging Medicine, a Salve for every sore, being a help to all duties, a quickner of all graces, and a comfort in all distresses. And like a well-fill'd Apothacaries shop, there is contained in them, heavenly receipts of all sorts, wholesome physick of every kind, for expelling and curing all sorts of diseases and sicknesses incident to Saints, and for the corroborating and strengthening of the new nature, and keeping the spiritual man in a good healthful constitution, lusty and strong, able for Gods Service, and for working out his own salvation with fear and trembling.

Wouldst thou then have thy faith like the Light in the Lords Sanctuary, never to go out? then acquaint thy self with Gods Promises, know them well, meditate on them, confer about them: let them be continually in thy mind, memory, heart and tongue. Satan laboureth in nothing more, then to keep us in unbeleif, especially of particular promises; for he knows, if we beleive them, we shall in all things have the victory: Come before God with boldness, carry peace in our own bosomes to our graves, and do, and suffer any thing for God.

Oh, the abundance of sweet cordial comfort, which

which all humble beleiving ſouls draw by faith out of every promiſe. And theſe precious promiſes (our breaſts of conſolation) whereupon our comfort and happineſs ſo much depend, lye hid in the holy Scriptures, as veins of gold in the earth. How then ſhould we be ſearching into thoſe rich mines that bring to light ſuch heavenly treaſures? and how ſhould it ſtir us up to go to God in prayer, for the accompliſhment of them unto us, and waiting in the diligent uſe of all means for the gaining of them? you ſhall find God not only making you heirs of Promiſes, but you ſhall be comfortable poſſeſſors of thoſe many good things, which God hath promiſed to beleivers. And the more you meditate, and the oftner you pray upon them, the more good will you ſee in them, and find to flow from them. And this leads me to the next Spiritual Receipt and Soveraign Antidote, and that is Prayer.

The Fourth Spiritual Receit.

4ly. The fourth ſpecial Receit and preſervative againſt this contagious diſeaſe, or which may be of excellent force and efficacy for the removal of it; is *faithful and fervent Prayer*. This is a tried receipt, an approved remedy; of which I may ſay, as *David* ſaid to *Abimelech* the Preiſt, concerning the Sword of *Goliah*, *There is none like to it*, 1 *Sam.* 21. 9. A moſt incomparable weapon, if we have skill to uſe it.

Let us conſider a little then what Prayer is, as to the derivation and definition of it. I find that Prayer comes of a word in the *Hebrew*, which ſig-

nifieth, *Appeal*; whereby we refer the Cauſe of our ſelves or others unto God, as unto the Supream Judge; calling upon him, appealing unto him for right, preſenting our ſelves and our cauſe unto him, as to one who hath power to determine Cauſes, and to whom appeals may be made. And if you would have a breif deſcription of it, It is the pouring out of the humble, penitent, beleiving ſoul before the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 1. 15. Or as one very pithily defines it, It is *Devotæ animæ cum Deo colloquium*, that is, It is the talk or conference of the devout ſoul with God. For a man barely to ſpeak in the air, and his heart have no approaches unto God in it, this is no Prayer in Gods account. I cannot therefore let paſs, that excellent ſaying of *Bernard*, *Cum oramus, cum Deo loquimur, cum legimus, Deus nobiſcum loquitur: Si vis cum Deo ſemper eſſe, ſemper ora, & ſemper lege*; that is, When we pray, we ſpeak with God; when we read, God ſpeaketh with us: If thou wilt always be with God, then always pray, and always read. More plainly and fully: *It is a work of the ſpirit of Chriſt in the beleiving ſoul, by which we deſire of God alone, things lawful and needful, with confidence to obtain them, through the alone mediation and interceſſion of Chriſt, to the praiſe and glory of his name.*

So then, if thou wilt pray aright, and find acceptance with God therein; thou muſt pray to him, and to him alone; in the name, and through the alone mediation and interceſſion of Chriſt, by the powerful, and immediate help and aſſiſtance of his own ſpirit; and that beleivingly, from the heart, with underſtanding, and feeling of our

wants,

wants, in fervency of ſpirit, forgivingly, reverently and perſeveringly: Without which ingredients, never think of putting up an acceptable Prayer unto God, with any confidence or aſſurance to be heard at the throne of grace.

I ſhall touch a little upon the particulars, for the help of ſuch poor ſouls, whoſe deſires are to grow into a more ſpiritual acquaintance with God.

Firſt then, If thou wilt pray aright, thou muſt pray to God, and to him only, and that in the name of Chriſt. God alone is to be invocated and prayed unto, not Saints, nor Angels. Chriſt in his prayer which he taught his Diſciples, would have us direct our Petitions unto God our Father which is in Heaven, *Luk.* 11. 2. *Mat.* 6 9 And why to God alone?

1. Becauſe God onley is *Omni-preſent*, every where preſent, in all places, and at all times. But this is inconſiſtent to any creature to be *ubiquitary*, or preſent in all places. But that God is ſo, ſee *Jer.* 23.23,24. *Am I a God at hand* (ſaith the Lord) *and not a God a far off? Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth, ſaith the Lord?* ſee *Pſal.* 139.7,8. *God is not only the God of the hills, but of the valleys alſo,* 1 *King.* 20. 28.

2. Becauſe God as he is *Omni-preſent*, ſo he is *Omniſcient*; he knoweth all things; all the hearts of the Sons of men. So ſaid *Solomon* in the prayer he made at the Dedication of the Temple. *For thou, even thou only knoweſt the hearts of all the children of men,* 1 *King.* 8. 39. So *Jer.* 17. 9. *I the Lord ſearch the heart, and try the reins. Neither is*

there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 13. For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings, *Prov.* 5. 21. Doth he not see my ways, and count all my steps, saith *Job? Chap.* 31. 4. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, *Job* 24. 21, 22. So *Psal.* 94. 9, 10, 11. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity.

3. God is stiled a God hearing prayers, *Psal.* 65. 2. and this *David* could speak experimentally; *Verily, God hath heard me: he hath attended to the voice of my prayer: blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me*, Psal. 66. 19, 20.

4. As he is a God hearing prayer, so he is most able to help, *Psal*, 52. 2. *I will cry unto God most high: unto God that performeth all things for me He shall send from heaven and save me*, Eph. 3. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us: Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages world without end, Amen.* So *Asa*, when a mighty host came against him, in his prayer, lays hold on Gods power and ability to help. *Lord* (saith he) *it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us O Lord God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude*, 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. So *Jehosaphat*, when a great multitude of the *Moabites* and *Amonites*

Amonites came againſt him, he ſets himſelf to ſeek the Lord, as able and all-ſufficient to help him. And ſaid, *O Lord God of our Fathers, art not thou God in heaven, and ruleſt not thou over all the kingdomes of the Heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? O our God, wilt not thou judge them? for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee?* 2 *Chron.* 20. 6, 12.

5. Prayer is a Divine Worſhip and a Spiritual Sacrifice. God would have us to call upon him in the day of trouble, *Pſal.* 50. 15. And if we ſhould be ſeeking help from any other, he will take it very ill at our hands. *If we have forgotten the name of our God, or ſtretched out our hands to a ſtrange god* (ſaith the Church) *ſhall not God ſearch this out? for he knoweth the ſecrets of our hearts,* Pſal. 44. 20, 21. *In every place Incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering* (ſaith the Lord.) Mal. 1 11. So *Pſal.* 141. 2. *Let my prayer be ſet forth before thee as incenſe: and the lifting up of mine hands as an evening ſacrifice.* There was given to the Angel that ſtood at the Altar, having a golden cenſer, much incenſe, *That he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the throne of God. And the ſmoke of the incenſe, which came with the prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God, out of the Angels hand,* Rev. 8. 3, 4. By this Angel, we are to underſtand Chriſt our Mediator, called the Angel or Meſſenger of the Covenant, or the Angel of Gods preſence, *Mal.* 3. 1. and *Iſa.* 63. 9. who alone is the High Preiſt of Heaven, and offereth and preſenteth

ſenteth our prayars with the incenſe of his merits and interceſſion upon the golden Altar, that is, upon himſelf, unto God, for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour, as is teſtified, *Rom.*8.34. *Eph.*5.2. *Heb.*14.14. See alſo *Rev.*5:8.

6. In God onely we ought to beleive, therefore he onely is to be called upon. *He that commeth to God muſt beleive that he is, &c.* Heb.11.6. *The ſame Lord who is over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. For whoſoever ſhall call upon the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved,* Rom. 10.12,13. Again, we are to pray unto God in the name of Chriſt, which is not rudely and cuſtomarily to ſay theſe words, *Through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, &c.* but in confidence of the merits and interceſſion of Chriſt to call on God our heavenly Father: For ſince the fall of man none are called to come to God, or have promiſe to ſpeed, but in the name of a Mediator. *I am the way, the truth and the life,* ſaith Chriſt, *no man commeth to the Father but by me,* Joh.14.6. *And there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus,* 1 Tim. 2.15. *John* calls him the Advocate (he who pleads our cauſe) with the Father, 1 *Joh.* 2.1. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them,* Heb. 7. 25. In Chriſt alone we have acceſs to the throne of grace; Or as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *Through him we have an acceſs by one ſpirit unto the Father,* Epheſ.2.18. *In whom we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him,* Eph.3 12. And what ſaith Chriſt himſelf? *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my name he will give it you,* Joh.16.23. So Col.3.17. *What-*

Whatſoever ye do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him. Angels or Saints departed do not, nor cannot preſent our prayers before God. Abraham *is ignorant of us*, Iſa.63.16. Chriſt onely is our Mediator and High Prieſt, who getteth an acceptation of our prayers before God, *Heb.* 4. 14. *Rev.*8.3.

Again, We are to pray in the name of Chriſt through the ſpirit: *Likewiſe the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that ſearcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, becauſe he maketh interceſſion for the Saints according to the will of God,* Rom. 8.26,27. *But ye beloved, building up your ſelves in your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy ghoſt,* Jude ver.20. *Praying always with all prayer and ſupplication in the ſpirit,* Epheſ.6,18. No praying aright but in and by the Spirit; *God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth,* Joh,4.14. And prayer ſurely is a principal part of his ſpiritual worſhip. Is it not ſad then to conſider how carnal and formal worſhippers do deride and make a mock at the Spirit of God! O ſay they, you cannot pray, but by the ſpirit.

So for Faith, that alſo is a neceſſary ingredient in prayer. *James* ſpeaks of the prayer of faith that ſhall ſave the ſick, *Jam* 5.15. So alſo 1 *Tim.* 2.8. and *Matth.*21.22. And all things whatſoever ye ſhall ask in prayer, beleiving ye ſhall receive; Now this faith will work to the purifying of the heart. For if we regard iniquity in our hearts,

God

God will not hear us, *Pſa.*66.18. We haveing therefore gracious promiſes from God that he will grant our requeſts, that he will be very gracious unto us at the voyce of our cry, *Iſa.*30.19. That when we call he will anſwer, *Iſa.*58.9. and deliver us out of all our affiictions, *Pſal.* 34.19. We muſt come unto God, beleiving his word, for that he is true and faithful; as *Sarah*, who received ſtrength to conceive ſeed, and was delivered of a child, when ſhe was paſt age; becauſe ſhe judged him faithful who had promiſed, *Heb.*11.11. But if hope to ſpeed does not accompany our prayers they are vain. Let not the doubting and wavering man think that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord, *Jam.*1.6,7. Yet know withal, that this hope ſometimes is very weak and feeble, and many times ſeems to be overwhelmed in the godly, *Pſ.*13.1,2. 31.22. and 77.7,8,9.

Again, As it muſt be a prayer of Faith, ſo it muſt be from the heart, with fervency of ſpirit. Prayer is not a lip labour, nor a formal devotion; but it is the ſighs and groans of a broken and penitent heart. *Hanna* ſpake in her heart when her voyce was not heard, 1 *Sam.*1.13. *Moſes* is ſaid to cry unto the Lord, when we find not one word that he uttered with his mouth, *Exod.*14.15. Hence is the exhortation that we be *fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*, Rom.12.11. And it is ſaid, that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, *Jam.* 5.16. As the things we beg are of more excellent uſe for us, ſo muſt we be more eager and importunate with the Lord for the obtaining of them. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voyce unto the Lord did I make my ſupplica-

plication. I poured out my complaint before him. I ſhewed before him my trouble, *Pſal.* 142. 1,2. This ſhewed the earneſtneſs and ſerventneſs of his ſpirit in prayer. So *Pſ.*80.1. Give ear, O ſhepherd of *Iſrael*, thou that dwelleſt between the cherubims, ſhine forth. Before *Ephraim*, *Benjamin* and *Manaſſeh*, ſtir up thy ſtrength and come and ſave us: This ariſeth from the conſideration of the neceſſity and excellency of what we deſire, as alſo from a burning zeal of Gods glory, and hearty love of our brethren, in oppoſition to a ſpirit of hypocriſie, formality, ſluggiſhneſs and vain-babling; *Thou ſhalt ariſe and have mercy upon Zion: For the time to favour her, yea, the ſet time is come.* And what then? *For* Sions *ſake I will not hold my peace, and for* Jeruſalems *ſake I will not reſt, until the righteouſneſs thereof go forth as brightneſs, and the ſalvation thereof as a lamp that burneth*, Pſ.102.13.com.with Iſa.62.1.

Again, when we pray, we muſt pray with underſtanding, 1 *Cor.*14.15. Blind devotion is no way pleaſing to God. The ſoul without knowledge is not good, *Prov.* 19. 2. God will not be ſuperſtitiouſly and ignorantly worſhipped, *Aũs* 17. 22, 23. The blind and the lame was not to come into the houſe of God. *If ye offer the blind for ſacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and ſick, is it not evil? Offer it unto thy Governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon?* Mal.1.8. God requires to be ſerved with the mind, *Matth.*22.37. We muſt therefore know the will of God, as he hath revealed it unto us, by his commandments, promiſes, threatnings, the approved practices of the Saints, and that we muſt deſire and pray for, and onely ſo as we know Gods word doth warrant

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us. *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us*, 1 Joh.5.14. *And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight*, 1 John 3.22. So said the blind man that had his sight restored to him again; *Now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God and doth his will, him he heareth*, Joh.9.31.

Again, We must pray with a feeling of our wants. Christs invitation to come unto him, is to all that labour and are heavy laden, *Matth.* 11.28. In prayer we should feel sin as a burden, and mourn under the sensibility of our want of grace. So *Ephraim* bemoned himself, *Jer.*31.18. And the Church, *Isa.*63.17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways? and hardned our heart from thy fear? return for thy servants sake, the Tribes of thine inheritance.* So *David* being made very sensible of his great fall, after what manner is his spirit led forth in prayer? *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit*, Psal.51.10,11,12. Now this ariseth from the consideration of Gods judgements due to sin, and of the necessity of saving grace. So Ezra; *O my God I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities are encreased over our heads, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens*, Ez.9.6. And the Apostles being sensible of the imbicility and weakness of their faith, pray unto the Lord for the increase of it. *And for this thing*, said Paul, *I besought the*

Lord

Lord thrice that it might depart from me. So ſenſible was he of the thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan that buffeted him, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7, 8.

Again, our Prayer muſt be accompanied with a ſpirit of love and forgiveneſs, *Mark* 11. 25. And when ye ſtand praying, forgive, if ye have ought againſt any man, *that your Father alſo which is in Heaven, may forgive you your treſpaſſes: For if ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes*, Mat. 6. 14, 15. And as we muſt forgive our enemies, and ſuch as have offended us, ſo muſt we bear a hearty affection to the Children of God, *Epheſ.* 4. 32. and *Coloſ.* 3. 12, 13.

Again, our Prayer muſt be accompanied with fear and reverence, in reſpect of the purity and Majeſty of that preſence we come into. So ſaith *Solomon, Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few*, Eccleſ. 5. 2. And we are to ſerve God acceptably with reverence, and godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 28. Surely, did we ſeriouſly conſider Gods moſt excellent Majeſty, we ſhould not raſhly conceive, or utter any thing before him, but with reverence. So *Abraham, Behold ſaid he, I have now taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but duſt and aſhes*, Gen. 18. 27. This reverential fear, is an unfeigned abaſement of the mind, proceeding from a conſideration of Gods divine Majeſty, and our own indignity. So the Prodigal, *Father I have ſinned againſt Heaven,*

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and in thy ſight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, Luk. 15. 21. So *Jacob*, *I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant*, Gen. 32. 10. *Job* abhorred himſelf, and repented in duſt and aſhes, *Job* 42. 6. The Prophet *Iſaiah* cries out he is undone, woe unto him, for his eyes had ſeen the King, the Lord of Hoſts, *Iſa.* 6. 5. and *Ezra* alſo, he did bluſh and was aſhamed to lift up his face to God, for that their iniquities were encreaſed, and their treſpaſſe grown up unto the heavens, *Ezra.* 9 6.

Laſtly, our Prayer muſt be with perſeverance, without ceaſing, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 17. The Parable concerning the importunate Widow, was to this end, *that men ought always to pray and not to faint*, Luk. 18. 1. That is, that we ſhould be conſtant and earneſt in prayer, uſe all importunity with the Lord, and not to faint; this is that which will diſtinguiſh us from being Hypocrites, and falſe-hearted before the Lord; For what is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his ſoul? will God hear his cry when trouble commeth upon him? Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? No, he will not, *Job* 27. 8, 9, 10. But the gracious ſoul loves to draw nigh to God, and takes delight always in his approaching to him.

Thus having ſpoken of the ſeveral ingredients that will make up an acceptable Prayer unto the Lord; I ſhall ſpeak a little as to the ſingular worth excellency, and efficacy of it; and the worth and excellency of it appears in this: Becauſe, it

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is a ſweet priviledge which Chriſt hath purchaſed of the Father for us, *Epheſ.* 2. 18. It is through him that we have an acceſs unto the Father, ſo as to come with boldneſs unto the throne of his grace, *Heb.* 4. 16. Hereby we do and may continually commune with the Lord after a familiar manner, and lay open our griefs into his boſome.

As *David*, *Who am I O Lord God, and what is my houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto? And is this the manner of man O Lord God?* 2 Sam. 7. 18. So again, *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher then I, for thou haſt been a ſhelter for me, and a ſtrong Tower from the enemy*, Pſa. 61. 2, 3. Hereby we teſtifie our dutiful affection to him, as the Prodigal to his Father, *Luk.* 15. 18. And become helpers to others, *Rom.* 15. 30. *Phil.* 1. 19. *Col.* 4. 12. 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1. This adds ſtrength to our faith, and gives life to the graces of God that are in us. By it we obtain at the hand of God whatever good we ſtand in need of, *Mat.* 7. 7. Iſa. 65. 24. And do grow into a better acquaintance with God. As *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 23, 27. For ſuch is the Promiſe, that if we draw nigh to God, he will draw nigh to us, *Jam.* 4. 8. By it we fight manfully againſt our in-bred unmortified corruptions, *Epheſ.* 6. 18. By it Croſſes are prevented, removed, or ſanctified, yea, all things are ſanctified unto us, and we are ſo kept and preſerved, that we fall not into temptation, 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Mat.* 26. 41. Yea, often times we obtain much more good then we deſire or expect. *Solomon* begged onely of the

Lord, an understanding heart, and God gave him both riches, and honour, which he asked not, 1 *King.* 3. 13. So able is the Lord to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, *Ephes.* 3. 20. So that of Prayer, we may say, it is a Key to open the door of Gods treasure-house, a present remedy for an oppressed mind, a giver of strengh to the weak, and an especial means to make a man fit to live knowingly, fruitfully, and serviceably to God in every state and condition, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. What shall I say of it? but as one saith well and truly; It is, *Consolatio flentium, cura dolentium, & sanitas agrotorum.* A Comfort for them that mourn, the joy of the sorrowful, and health for those that [illegible] what will it [illegible] it not done? It goes through [illegible] and ceaseth not until it come unto the Lord; and if entreaties will not do, it will (with reverence be it spoken) lay commands upon him, *Isa.* 45. 11. Yea, it doth as it were, bind up the hands of the Lord, and hinder him from executing his judgements, overcoming him that overcometh all things, *Let me alone,* saith the Lord to *Moses, or suffer me that my wrath may wax hot against them,* (to wit) the *Israelites, that I may consume them,* Exod. 32. 10. *Abrahams* prayer had saved *Sodom* from being destroyed, had there been found ten righteous persons therein, *Gen.* 18. Yea, it is very observable, that the Lord did not leave granting, till *Abraham* left off petitioning. By prayer *Jacob* was delivered from the wrath and fury of his Brother *Esau*, Gen. 32. 11. *Jonah* out of the Fishes belly, *Jonah* 2, 10. The three

Children

Children from the fiery Furnace; *Daniel* from the Lions Den, *Dan.* 3. 6. *Jonahs*, and *Pauls* Mariners from the danger of the Seas; and *Joseph*, and *Paul*, and *Silas*, and *Peter*, and others out of Prison, *Act.* 5. 16. By Prayer *Eliah* stayed the Rain three years and six months, and again obtained Rain, so that the earth yeilded her fruit, *James* 5. 17. By Prayer *Elisha* had the spirit of *Eliah* doubled upon him, and procured Bears to destroy the mocking Children, 2 *King.* 2. raised from death to life the *Shunamites* Son, So Chap. 4. Had the eyes of his Servant opened, so that he saw Mountains full of Horses, and Chariots of fire round about him, and smote the *Syrians* with blindness, which came to take him, *Chap.* 6. By Prayer *Joshua* commanded the Sun to stand still in the midst of Heaven, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies, *Josh.* 10. 12, 13. By Prayer *Isaiah* brought back the Sun ten degrees in the Dial of *Ahaz*, 2 *King.* 20 11. By Prayer *David* frustrated the wicked counsel of *Achitophel*, and often put his enemies to flight, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *and* 16. 23. and *Psa.* 56. 9. By Prayer *Hezekiah* was delivered from the King of *Assyria*, and his health restored unto him again, *Isa.* 37. and 2 *King.* 18. The *Ninevites* were delivered from the judgements threatned against them, *Jonah* 2. *Peter* raised *Tabitha*, and *Paul Eutichus*, that had fallen down by sleeping, *Act.* 9. 40. *and* 20. 10. The *Centurians* Servant, the *Cananites* Daughter, and Lunatick persons were healed; men blind received their sight; the stammering and deaf were made to hear and speak; Lepers

were clenſed, and certain perſons being dead, were reſtored to life again. So much availeth Prayer with the Lord, if it be fervent. But to bring it a little more cloſe as to the preſent viſitation of the Lord; See of what force and efficacy it hath been with the Lord to appeaſe his wrath, and ſtay the execution of his judgments. When the Children of *Iſrael* fell a murmuring, and had greatly provoked the Lord by their unbelief, inſomuch that the Lord threatned to ſmite them with Peſtilence, and diſinherit them; *Moſes* falls a pleading and interceeding with the Lord for them. Pardon I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatneſs of thy mercy, and as thou haſt forgiven this people from *Egypt*, even until now. *And the Lord ſaid, I have pardoned according to thy word*, Numb. 14. 12, 19, 20. So that only *thoſe men who brought up the evil report upon the land, dyed by the Plague before the Lord*, verſ. 37. So in the caſe of *Korah Dathan* and *Abiram*, when the Congregation of the Children of *Iſrael* murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, ſaying, *they killed the people of the Lord*, This ſo greatly incenſed the Lord, that he bad them *go up from the congregation, that he might conſume them in a moment*; Hereupon the Text ſaies, *they fell upon their faces, and* Aaron *according to the command of* Moſes, *takes his Cenſer and puts fire therein, from off the Alter, and put on Incenſe, and made an attonement for the people, for there was wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague was begun. And* Aaron *ſtood between the dead and the living, and the Plague was ſtaid*, Numb. 16. 45, 46, 47. This ſheweth how greatly

greatly the Prayers and actions of Gods Servants do prevail with him, when they are faithful, fervent, and according to his will, *Jam.* 5. 16. 1 *John* 5. 14. and foreſhewed alſo the power and efficacy of Chriſts meditation for poor ſinners, who is repreſented by the Angels ſtanding at the Altar, *having a golden Cenſer, and much incenſe given unto him, to offer it with the prayers of all Saints,* Rev. 8. 3.

For God heareth him always, *John* 11. 40. And he it is that makes interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors, *Iſa.* 53. 12. and is the attonement or propitiation for our ſins, 1 *John* 2. 1. and for his ſake God before whom the Peſtilence goeth, in wrath remembreth mercy, *Hab.* 3. 2, 5. And as the blood of the Paſchal Lamb (figuring the blood of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7.) ſtayed the Angel which deſtroyed the *Egyptians* from touching the *Iſraelites*, *Exod.* 12. 23. *Heb.* 11. 28. So the ſmoke of *Aarons* incenſe (figuring the meditation of Chriſt, *Pſa.* 141. 2. *Rev.* 8. 4. Stayed the Plague here from the *Iſraelites* which ſurvived. That as it is written of the Peſtilence in *Davids* time, *The Lord repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the Angel that deſtroyed the people; It is enough, ſtay now thy hand,* 2 Sam. 24. 16. So in this verſe, the further efficacy and effect of faithful fervent prayer, for the removal of this ſore viſitation of the Lord, is clearly held forth in that Prayer of *Solomon* at the Temples dedication; *If there be in the Land Famine, if there be Peſtilence, whatſoever Plague, whatſoever Sickneſs there be, what Prayer and Supplication ſoever be made by any man, or by all thy people* Iſrael,

which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house. Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, &c. 1 *King.* 8. 37, 38, 39. And the Lord gave approbation to this prayer of his, as you have heard. Thus you see in what way the Lord hath usually been found for the diverting of his judgments, and in which he hath ingaged himself to hear, and to be entreated.

Shall we consider a little then, what is the general spirit of the Nation at this time; now that the hand of God lies so heavy upon it. Is there any preparation now of meeting God, in this way of humble and faithful supplication? *O England* where are thy tears, where are thy strong crys unto unto the Lord? Will not the King of *Nineveh* rise up in judgment against thee, and condemn thee? He commanded that Man and Beast should be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hand; and God was entreated, and turned away from his fierce anger, that they perished not.

What thinkest thou, O *England*, of thy sins? Have they not been crying sins? May not the Lord speak unto thee, and say, as unto *Cain*; *Who slew his Brother, what hast thou done? The voice of thy Brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground,* Gen. 4. 10. Or as *James* in his time, to the rich ungodly men of that generation: *Behold the hire of the Labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabboth. Ye have lived in plea-*

sure

ſure on the earth, and been wanton: ye have nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of ſlaughter: Ye have condemned and killed the juſt, and he doth not reſiſt you, James 5. 4, 5, 6.

May it not be ſaid of thy ſins, as is ſaid of the ſins of *Babylon*, *That her ſins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembred her iniquities*, Rev. 18. 5. Surely thy ſins have been crying ſins, they have entred into the ears of the Lord, they have reached unto heaven: God hath heard thy hideous Oaths, thy new helliſh invented Oaths, thy horrid execrations and curſings, thy revilings and blaſpemings. But whom haſt thou reproached and blaſphemed? and againſt whom haſt thou exalted thy voice? and lifted up thine eyes on high? may it not be ſaid of thee, as of railing *Rabſhekah*; *Even againſt the holy one of* Iſrael? And if thy ſins have cryed ſo loud, mayſt thou not think that thy tears and crys for pardon ſhould ſound as loud in the ears of God?

But where are thy repentings and mournings? where are thy weepings and ſupplications? Surely, I tremble to think, what ſtill mine ears do hear and mine eyes ſee, how few of thoſe ſins are left, which cauſe the Land to mourn, and the Lord to have a controverſie with the inhabitants thereof. May it not be laid to thy charge, even now when thouſands are ſwept away by this deſtroying judgement, that when God calls to weeping and mourning, to faſting and praying; behold, joy and gladneſs, ſlaying oxen and killing ſheep, eating fleſh and drinking wine, playing and gaming, ranting and roaring, curſing and ſwearing, pride and voluptuous living? And what ſaid the Lord? *Sure-*

ly this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye dye, Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14. Nay, is it not most sad and lamentable to consider, as it is very credibly reported, that some under the hand of Gods visitation, do dye swearing and cursing, in a most dreadful and desperate manner.

Well then, consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in peices, and there be none to deliver, before the whole land be devoured by the fire of his jealousie, and that he make a speedy riddance of all such as dwell in the land. But for you, who have received an anointing from the holy one, and are acquainted with the divine art of prayer, and holy conference and familiarity with God; be much in the exercise of this heavenly skill, be now improving to the utmost your interest in God; lift up your voice with strength, stir up your selves and take hold of him. And if your consciences tell you, you have fallen by your iniquities, even in the late Apostacy. *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.* Say unto him, Ashur *shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods*, Hosea 14. 1, 2, 3. Say unto him, O Lord, though our iniquities testifie against us, do thou it for thy names sake, for our back-slidings are many, we have sinned against thee. O the hope of *Israel*, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of

us,

us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not, *Jer.* 14. 7, 8, 9. Say, *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousneſs are as filthy raggs, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away; But yet, O Lord, thou art our Father: we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, ſee we beſeech thee, we are thy people,* Iſa. 64. 6, 8, 9. *Thine enemies roar in the midſt of the Congregation, they ſet up their enſigns for ſigns: They have caſt fire into thy Sanctuary, they have defiled, by caſting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground. They ſaid in their hearts, let us deſtroy them together: O God, how long ſhall the Adverſary reproach? ſhall the enemy blaſpheme thy name for ever? Why withdraweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy boſome. Wilt thou refrain thy ſelf for theſe things, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very ſore,* Pſal. 74. *And let the Preiſts, the Miniſters of the Lord weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them ſay, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the heathen ſhould rule over them: wherefore ſhould they ſay among the people, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people,* Joel 2. 17, 18. Yea, let the Lords Watchmen, whom God hath ſet upon the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, never hold their peace day nor night; even thoſe who make mention of the Lord, and are the Lords remembrancers, let them not keep ſilence. *And give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh and make his Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth,* Iſa. 62. 6, 7. Till the heavens drop down from above, and the skies

pour

pour down righteousness, and the earth open, and bring forth salvation, and righteousness spring up together, *Isa.* 45. 8. *Till the Lord of Hosts be exalted in judgement, and God that is holy be sanctified in righteousness*, Isa. 5. 16. Thus much for the fourth soveraign Receipt.

The Fifth Spiritual Receipt.

5ly. The next Spiritual Receipt, and especial preservative against this Pestilential sickness, which I shall recommend unto thee, is this. *Have thy dwelling now in the secret place of the most high*, Psal. 91. 1. or as it is further expresst in the 9. *ver.* of the same Psalm, *Make the Lord thy refuge, even the most high thy habitation.*

In Pestilential and contagious times, and when the sickness comes near to our own houses, most men and womens thoughss are busied about their habitations and dwellings; where they shall remove and have their beings, so as they think they may be most safe and secure from the stroke of Gods Visitation; and therefore they will chuse (especially such as are more able and wealthy) the best country where is the best aire, and most healthful soil, and the best company, and food, and such other accommodations, as may probably conduce to the keeping of themselves in a sound and healthful constitution. In some cases such provisions as these may be necessary, expedient, and lawful. And therefore it is upon my heart now to direct thee where thou mayst take up a most secure and safe habitation, and that is in God, in the secret place of the most high, under the shadow of the Al-

Almighty; and let me tell thee, whoever thou art that ſeekeſt ſecurity and protection elſewhere, and takeſt not up thy dwelling in God, thou wilt be fruſtrated in thy expectation. *Shouldſt thou hid thy ſelf in the top of* Carmel, *Amos* 9. 3. *Or take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea,* Pſal. 139. 9. even there his hand will find thee out, and the ſtroke of his indignation will light upon thee. The only way then to ſecure thy ſelf, is not to be flying from, but to be flying unto God; to be living and dwelling in God. God as he is a ſecret) place, ſo he is a ſecure place. Every man would be there (eſpecially in times of danger) where he may be moſt ſecret and ſecure. But what may we underſtand by making God our habitation, or by dwelling in the ſecret place of the moſt high. The words are very comprehenſive, and of a large extent, but I ſhall reduce them under ſome following heads; after I have toucht a little by way of explanation, or opening of them.

By the ſecret place of the moſt high, we may underſtand Heaven, the ſeat and throne of God, which the Scripture holds forth under theſe three denominations or expreſſions.

To wit, *His high place, his holy place, his ſecret place.*

His high place, Pſal. 93. 4. *The Lord on high is mightier then the noiſe of many waters,* Pſal. 97. 9. *Thou Lord art high above all the earth, above all people,* Pſal. 99. 2. The Lord is high above all Nations, and his glory above the heavens, *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high,* Pſal. 113. 5. heaven is a high place.

So

So it is his *Holy place*, in *Pſal.* 46. 4. they are joyned both together: *The River, the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God*; is ſaid to be, *the holy place of the tabernacles of the moſt high.* So in *Iſa.* 57. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe name is holy*; And mark what follows? *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit*, &c. In *Pſal.* 68. 5. *A Father of the fatherleſs, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation*, that is, in heaven his holy habitation, or the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory, as it is termed, *Iſa.* 63. 15.

So here it is called his *Secret place*, the ſecret place of the moſt high; and heaven may very fitly be called Gods ſecret place, as well as his high and holy place; becauſe God and Chriſt, and the things of heaven and eternity, they are ſecret, hidden, and myſterious things. *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. So in *Col.* 1. 26. The Apoſtle calls it, *The myſtery hid from ages and generations, but now* (ſaith he) *is made manifeſt to his Saints*; and the Saints themſelves they have but an imperfect ſight of God. We ſee but his back part, *Exod.* 33. 23. but as through a glaſs darkly; *We know but in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect ſhall be done away*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10, 12. Hence it is, that God is ſaid, *To dwell in that light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, or can ſee*, 2 *Tim.* 6. 17.

2. Jeſus Chriſt may be ſaid to be Gods *Secret place.*

1. In that he is ſaid as before, *To be the myſtery, which was kept ſecret ſince the world began*, Rom. 16. 25.

2. In

2. In respect of that incomprehensible union that is betwixt the Father, and the Son, *Joh.* 17.21.

3. Because the declaration or revelation of the Father is from Christ, *who is in the bosome of the Father*, John 1. 18. and thats a Secret place. And the Apostle speaks of a life that is hid with God in Christ, *Col.* 3.3.

4. In respect of Christs eternity with the Father. *The Lord possessing him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Then was Christ by him, as one brought up with him*, Prov. 8. 22, 30.

5. Christ himself is said to be, *A hidding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*, Isa. 32.2.

3. The Church (which was figured by the Tabernacle) may be said to be Gods Secret place, his dwelling place. *God hath desired it for his habitation; This* (saith he) *is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it*, Psal. 132.13, 14. To which purpose is that in *Psal.* 27.5. where we read of the secret of his tabernacle, *In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me*; which hath reference to the Sanctuary or Ark, the place of Gods abode or visible presence, so to be hid in his pavilion, the Prophet declares the assurance he had, being shrouded under Gods protection, hide me or keep me safe, as in the most holy place of thy Sanctuary, *where none might enter, but the High Preist, and that alone, once every year, and not without blood neither, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people*, Heb. 9.7. And this is called Gods secret or hidden place, Ezek. 7.22. As his Saints are called his hidden ones, *Psal.* 83.3. So *Psal.* 31.20. *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence*, or thou hidest them in the hiding place of thy presence, where thou always looks unto them,

them, in secret favour, which the world knoweth not of. So then to dwell in the secret place of the most high, is to dwell in God, in Heaven, in Christ, in his Church, to have a conversation with God in the heavens; As the Apostle expresseth it, *Phil.* 3. 20. For our conversation is in Heaven; To have our affections on things above, *Col.* 3. 2. to live a life of fellowship and communion with God, as the Apostle *John* expresseth it, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3.

Again, To make God our habitation, includes these four or five particulars.

1. A mans habitation is the place of his constant residence and abode.

2. It is the place of his safety, security, and strength.

3. It is the place of his secrecy.

4. It is the place of his recreation, delectation, or delight.

5. It is the chief place of his negotiation, commerce and converse.

Under these five heads, or several sences, may we understand our dwelling in God, or making God our habitation.

1. Then the place of a mans dwelling, is the place of his constant residence or abode. When we would speak with a man, we enquire where he dwells, where his habitation is, for there we suppose he is resident; So then, if thou dwellest in God, if God is thy habitation, thou wilt have thy constant abode with him, thy residence with him; this holds forth a fixed station or habitation in and with God. Thou wilt not be as a stranger in a forreign Land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night, as *Jeremiah* expres-

preſſeth it, *Chap.* 14. 8. Thou wilt not take up a nights lodging with him, and then away, and be gone, as Travellers and wayfaring men uſe to do, but thou wilt abide with him, ſet up thy dwelling with him; many will out of a complement, now and then go and give a Friend or an Acquaintance a viſit: or for diverſions ſake, being tired it may be in their Shops, through multiplicity of buſineſs, and their worldly negotiations, they are willing to take a little recreation, when they can beſt diſpence with it. Even ſo do many deal with God, they will give him, it may be, a complemental viſit now and then; Some, they will go to Church now and then, and hear Divine Service (as they call it) or it may be if they hear where an able powerful man Preacheth, they will perhaps out of a humour, or ſome itching deſire, go and hear him; And others they will give God a viſit now and then, if it be but to ſtop the mouth of conſcience, they will pray now and then, and hear now and then, when their worldly occaſions will give them leave, they will be ſerving God when they know not how to ſerve themſelves. Nay, it may be, they will go a ſtrain higher, and expreſs ſome kind of delight in what they do, it ſhall be ſome kind of recreation unto them now, and then to come among the aſſemblies of Gods Saints, like thoſe whom the Lord reproves in the Prophet *Ezekiels* time, forward hearers they were, they ſpake one to another, every one to his Brother, ſaying, *Come I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord? And* (ſaies the Lord) *they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee*

they

as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not, Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32. O he's a gallant man, a learned man, say they, how excellently did he speak? even like a lovely song, that soundeth pleasantly. So is it said of *Herod*, that he heard *John* the Baptist, and observed him; yea, did many things, and heard him gladly, yet rather then he will part with his *Herodias*, his darling sin, off must go his head, *Mark* 6. 20. But this is not to dwell with God. Some people they have their fits in Religion, they will be seemingly devout now and then, and especially if their religion swims along with the times, and is in fashion, and a step to worldly preferment, so long they will follow Christ; but these not having root in themselves, endure but for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word, by and by they are offended, *Mat.* 13. 21. See then that thou hast thy dwelling, in God thy fixt habitation and abode in God. So had the Church in *Psa.* 90. 1, 2. *Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* This Psalm is said to be a Prayer of *Moses* the man of God, in which *Moses* does acknowledge the Lord to be their dwelling place, their habitation or mansion-house, or place of retreat in all generations, in all their travails through the terri-

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ble Wilderneſs, wherein God lead them; God was a refuge unto them in their greateſt ſtreights, and troubles at all times; He had promiſed that his preſence ſhould go with him, and that he would give him reſt, *Exod.* 33. 14. and *Moſes* did experience the truth of it. And therefore in *Deut.* 33. 26, 27. It is ſaid, *There is none like unto the God of* Jeſuran, *who rideth upon the heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the skie; The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting armes*; So in the 29. *verſe. Happy art thou, O* Iſrael; *Who is like unto thee, O people, ſaved by the Lord, the ſhield of thy help, and who is the Sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies ſhall be found liers unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their high places*; And then indeed mayſt thou be ſaid to dwell in God, to have a conſtant abode with him.

1. When (as *David*) thou art continually with him, *Pſa.* 73. 23. and ſet'ſt the Lord allways before thee, *Pſa.* 16. 8. This will awe us when we have opportunities and temptations to ſecret ſins, *Gen.* 39. 9. This will poſſeſs us with more reverence and godly fear in duties of his worſhip and ſervice, 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. This will provoke us to diligence in every good work. The eye of the Maſter makes a diligent Servant, *Col.* 3. 22. This will comfort us in our afflictions, and encourage us againſt fears; If we walk through the Valley of the ſhadow of death, we ſhall fear no evil, if the Lord is with us, *Pſa.* 23. 4. And he will be with us while we be with him, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. If we ſet the Lord always before us, we ſhall not be moved, *Pſa.* 16. 8. *Moſes* endured, as ſeeing

him who is invisible, *Hebr.* 11. 27.

2. Then mayst thou be said to dwell in God, and make him thy habitation and constant place of abode; when thou makest him thy chiefest good, when thou choosest him as thy portion, and chief happiness, and livest wholly upon him as thy All in all, *Rom.* 11. 36. When his name and glory is first inscribed on thy heart, chiefly in thine eye, and principally as thine end and aim, in all thy actions and undertakings, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. When thou canst say with the Psalmist, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee: My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever*, Psa. 73. 26. Then wilt thou not know, nor desire, nor love any creature, but purely, as subordinate to God. If this were but setled in our hearts, how would it ballast them, and keep them steddy, that they would not be tossed up and down with the various occurrences of this life, neither lift up with Prosperity, nor cast down with adversity, for whether we have more of these things, they make no considerable addition to us; God is our happiness, and not the creature; or whether we have less of these things, it is no diminution to our happiness; we still have our portion: We are but as a man that hath turned his estate into money, though he hath not houses, nor lands, nor flocks, nor herds; yet he hath that which *answers all things*, Eccles. 10. 19. So it is with one that hath God for his portion, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof; He can with *Habakkuk*, rejoyce in God, in the deprevation and absence of all other things, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18.

And

And say with *Paul*, *As sorrowful, yet alway rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things*; 2 Cor. 6. 10. Give twenty pounds to a poor man, and you make him; take so much from him, and you undoe him; but it is nothing in a rich mans Purse, that hath thousands coming in yearly; Let an unbeleiver loose the World, and he looseth all; he complains with *Laban* that his gods are gone, let him have these things in abundance, and he is transported like *Haman*, but these are small things with him, *whose portion is the Lord*; And therefore call nothing *prosperity or pleasure*, but his love, and nothing *adversity or misery* but his displeasure. When any thing would seem lovely and desireable which is against him, call it Dung; And hear that man, as Satan or the Serpent, that would entise thee from him; and count him but vanity, a worm and dust, that would affright thee from thy duty to him.

3. Then mayst thou be said to dwell in God, to have thy constant abode with him; When thou shalt prize all opportunities of communion with God in his Ordinances; as Prayer, Reading, and Hearing, the Word of God. So *David*, *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God*, Psa. 42. 1. *O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary*, Psa. 63. 1, 2. *and* 84. 1, 2. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of Hosts? my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord; my*

heart and my fleſh cryeth out for the living God. So Pſal. 122. 1. *I was glad when they ſaid unto me; let us go into the Houſe of the Lord.* This to do is our Duty, and our Priviledge.

1. It is our Duty, and part of that homage which we owe to God, as our Lord and Lawgiver, by prayer to acknowledge our dependance on him, Pſal. 65. 2. and our ſubjection to him, by ſitting down at his feet, to receive the Law from his mouth, to take our inſtructions from him, *Deut.* 33. 3.

2. It is our Priviledge, which coſt two of the greateſt gifts which heaven could afford, *Eph.* 2. 17. the Son of God, that we might have acceptance; The Spirit of God, that we might have aſſiſtance. What greater priviledge are we capable of? then at any time to go and reveal our cauſe to God, and to pour out our complaints before him, *Jer.* 20. 12. To have leave to beg any thing of him, *Luk.* 11. 13. To ask Counſel of him, *Pſal.* 119. 24. There being in our communion with God a transfuſion of ſpirits, the Lord communicating his Spirit or Divine Nature to us therein, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. Beſides our own preſſing neceſſities, which ſhould daily provoke us hereto. And the oftner we come to God, the more welcome ſhall we be, *Cant.* 2. 14. and the more boldneſs, and liberty, of acceſs we ſhall have; diſ-uſe and in-frequency, breeding a ſtrangneſs betwixt God and the Soul, and deading the heart to communion with him.

2. A Mans Houſe is the place of his ſafety, ſecurity, and ſtrength: We uſe to ſay, a mans Houſe is his Caſtle; then we make God our habitation, when we make him our refuge and our ſtrength.

So

So did *David*, *I will love thee, O Lord, my ſtrength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortreſs, and my deliverer: my God, my ſtrength in whom I will truſt, my buckler, the horn of my ſalvation, and my high tower*, Pſal. 18. 2. God was his ſtrength, his defender in all adverſities; God was his rock, where he fledfor refuge, when hunted and purſued by his enemies, his fortreſs or ſtrong hold, wherein he was ſafely kept and preſerved; his ſheild to overſhadow and defend him. The horn of his ſalvation, that is, the ſtrength of his deliverance, and the high tower or ſtrong tower of his protection, wherein to his righteous ſoul did run and was ſafe, *Prov.* 18. 10. In the 61. *Pſal.* 2. *and* 3. *David* prayeth, *That God would lead him to the rock, that was higher then he. For thou haſt been a ſhelter for me* (ſaith he) *and a ſtrong tower from the enemy.* So in the *Pſal.* 71. 3. *Be thou my ſtrong habitation, whereunto I may continually reſort.* Be thou to me for a rock of habitation, where I may continually fly unto in all my difficulties and diſtreſſes. See alſo *Pſal.* 31. 2. With what confidence in God was the Chuch carried forth upon this account; *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof*, Pſal. 46. 1, 2, 3. By the changing of the earth, and removing of mountains, are often meant the alteration of States and Polities, *Hagg.* 2. 21, 22. *Jerem.* 51. 25. *Rev.* 6. 14. By which we are given to underſtand, That in the time of the greateſt mutations and revolutions in

time of the greatest toſſings and tumblings, turnings and over-turnings, the Church would not be diſmayed, but confidently expect deliverance from God.

Well then, if thou wilt make God thy habitation, thy place of ſecurity and ſtrength, thy rock and thy fortreſs; Thou wilt make him thy only rock, thy only ſtay and truſt; thou wilt ſeek help and deliverance in all thy ſtreights and trouble from him, and from him only. *He only* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *is my rock and my ſalvation, he is my defence, I ſhall not be moved.* And from hence it is that he encourages his ſoul, *To waite only upon God*, telling us that his expectation was from him, *Pſal.* 62. 6, 7. Nor would he truſt in his Bow, nor on his Sword to ſave him. *Pſal.* 44. 6.

Now then doſt thou make God thy only rock, thy only refuge? Doſt thou flye unto him in all thy ſtreights, and to him only? or haſt thou recourſe to ſome other rock? to ſome other refuſe? Take heed of truſting in man and making fleſh thine arm: There's a curſe denounced againſt ſuch, *Jer.* 17. 5. Doſt thou go down into *Egypt*, to ſtrengthen thy ſelf in the ſtrength of *Pharaoh*? know then, that thou truſteſt but upon a broken ſtaff, and a bruiſed reed, as *Rabſhekeh* ſaid to *Hezekiah*, 2 *King.* 18. 21. even in a ſhadow. And that the ſtrength of *Pharaoh* ſhall be thy ſhame, and the truſt in the ſhadow of *Egypt* thy confuſion, *Iſa.* 30. 2, 3. Doſt thou put thy truſt in Princes, or in the Sons of Men? know that thou truſts but in a ſhadow likewiſe, *Judg.* 9. 15. and that there is no help in them; their breath goeth forth, they return to their earth, in that very day their thoughts periſh,

riſh, *Pſal.* 46. 3, 4. *And that its better to truſt in the Lord, then to put confidence in man; yea, then to put confidence in* Princes, Pſal. 118. 8, 9. Doſt thou truſt in graven Images, and ſay to the molten Images, ye are our gods? know thou ſhalt be turned back, and be greatly aſhamed, yea, confounded, *Iſa.* 42. 17. *Pſal.* 97. 7. Is thy truſt ſuch as is the hope of hypocrites? know that the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh and be cut off, and his truſt ſhall be as a ſpiders web, *Job* 8. 14. Doſt thou make gold thy hope, and ſay to the fine gold, thou art my confidence? truſting in the abundance of thy wealth, and ſtrengthening thy ſelf in thy wickedneſs: know that this is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judge, for that thou denieſt God that is above, *Job* 31. 24, 28. Yea, further know, *That God ſhall deſtroy thee for ever, and take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. And the righteous ſhall ſee, and fear, and laugh at thee* (and ſay) *Lo this is the Man that made not God his ſtrength*, Pſal. 52. 5, 6, 7. Doſt thou truſt in thine own beauty, and play the harlot, and pour out thy fornications? know that God will judge thee, as women that break wedlock, and ſhed blood are judged, and will give thee blood in fury and jealouſie, and throw down thine eminent places, and break down thy high places, and ſtrip thee of thy cloaths, and take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare, and execute judgments upon thee, *Ezek.* 16. 15, 36, 38, 41. Doſt thou truſt in lying words, ſaying, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are theſe*; and notwithſtanding Steal, Murder, and Commit Adultery, and Swear

falsly, and Burn Incense unto *Baal*, and Walk after other gods, and stand before the Lord, and say, *thou art delivered to do all these abominations?* know that these are lying words, that will not profit; but consider rather, what the Lord did to *Shiloh* (where he set his name at the first) for the wickedness of his people *Israel*, Jer. 7. 4, 8, 12. Dost thou trust to thine own righteousness, and commit iniquity? know that all thy righteousness shall not be remembred, but for thine iniquity, which thou committest, thou shalt dye for it, *Ezek.* 33. 13. Dost thou trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men? know, that therefore a tumult shall arise among the people, and all the fortresses shall be spoiled, *Hos.* 10. 13, 14. Dost thou trust in thine own purity, and say, stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou? know that thou art but a smok in Gods Nose, and a fire that burneth all the day, *Isa.* 65. 5. and that the Lord hath put no trust in his Servants, and his Angels he charged with folly. How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth, *Job* 4. 18, 19.

But after all this, perhaps thou wilt say, Thou wilt trust in thine own heart, for that will not deceive thee; wilt thou do so? know then thou art but a fool for thy labour in Gods account, *Prov.* 28. 26. Thy heart will deceive thee, for it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? *Jer.* 17. 9. Thus you see that God alone is to be trusted in, and to trust in any thing else, will be but as an *Egyptian* Reed to lean unto.

And

And as God alone is to be our rock and our refuge, so are we to make him our rock and our trust at all times. So is the Exhortation: *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us*, Psal. 62. 8. So *Isa.* 26. 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord* Jehovah *is everlasting strength: At what time I am afraid* (saith *David*) *I will trust in thee* (when his enemies were ready to swallow him up) *In God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me*, Psal. 56. 3, 4. And what said *Job? Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: I will maintain mine own ways before him*, Job 13. 15. Is it a time of evil tidings, thou wilt not be afraid, if thy heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, *Psal.* 112. 7. Dost thou fear the Lord, and yet walk in a dark disconsolate estate? even then art thou to trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon thy God, *Isa.* 50. 10.

And as thou art to make God alone thy rock, and thy refuge, and trust in him at all times, so with all thy heart, *Not leaning to thine own understanding, but in all thy ways acknowledging him, and he shall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 5, 6. *Yea, the Lord shall help thee, and deliver thee: he shall deliver thee from the wicked, and save thee, because thou trustest in him*, Psal. 37. 40. This *David* acknowledged Psal. 22. 4, 5. *Our Fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cryed unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*

Well then, wouldst thou have God to be a help and defence unto thee? Trust in him. *He is a Buckler or a sheild, to all those that trust in him.*

Psal.

Psal. 18. 30. Prov. 30. 5. *For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?* Psal. 18. 30, 31. 1 Sam. 2. 2. *He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he,* Deut. 32. 4. Wouldst thou be stedfast and unmovable, as the rock whereupon the Church is builded, against which no storms, nor tempests; no, nor the gates of hell shall ever prevail. Trust in God: *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever,* Psal. 125. 1. Wouldst thou possess the land, and inherite Gods holy Mountain; see that thou trust in him, *Isa.* 57. 13. Wouldst thou be fat and flourishing, and not cease from bearing of fruit? and that blessedness shall be thy portion. Trust in the Lord. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, whose leaf shall be green, and shall not cease from yeilding fruit,* Jerem. 17. 7, 8. Pro. 28. 25. And as *David* Psal. 40. 4. *Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust: and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.*

3. A mans House or Habitation is the place of his *Secretie*. Where does the Husband and the Wife, or a man and his freind, unbosome themselves, communicate their thoughts, and the very secrets of their hearts each to other; but usually and for the most part in their Houses, in their private Chambers and Closets? So it is with the Man or Woman that makes God their habitation. They'l go to God, and in their Closet and close retirements with the Lord, how will they unbosome them-

themſelves, and lay open their very hearts, and moſt ſecrets thoughts, and ſpread them before the Lord.

So did *Hanna* in the bitterneſs of her ſoul, ſhe prayed and wept ſore, and in her ſecret retirements ſhe poured out her ſoul before the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 1. 10, 15. meaning the trouble and anguiſh of her heart. So *David* when his ſpirit was overwhelmed within him, then he cried unto the Lord, and poured out his complaint before him, and ſhewed him all his trouble, *Pſal.* 142. 1, 2, 3. So *Jeremiah* 20. 10, 11, 12. when he lay under evil reports and defamation, and his familiars watched for his halting, what courſe does he take? He goes to God, and opens his cauſe unto him, or diſcovers his cauſe unto him, as to an Advocate or Patron. *O Lord of Hoſts* (ſaith he) *that trieſt the righteous, and ſeeſt the reins and the heart; let me ſee thy vengeance on them, for unto thee have I opened my Cauſe* So is it ſaid of *Hezekiah*, when he had received the Letter of railing *Rabſhekah* and read it, he goes up into the Houſe of the Lord, and ſpreads it before the Lord, in this manner. *O Lord God of Iſrael, which dwelleſt between the Cherubims; thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou haſt made heaven and earth. Lord bow down thine ear and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes and ſee: and hear the words of* Sennacharib, *which hath ſent him to reproach the living God.* This hath been the manner of the Servants of the Lord, who have made God their habitation; they go to God in ſecret, and pour out their ſouls before him. *O* (ſaith *Job*) *that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat? I would order my cauſe*

before

before him, and fill my mouth with arguments, Job 23. 3, 4. Holy *Job* (even now a Proverb, or a Prodigy rather) perceiving his freinds diſcourſes, were fuller of reproaches then conſolations, neglects to anſwer them, and reſolves to get him to God, the onely ſupport and refuge of the miſerable.

The ſoareſt ſtrokes, cannot drive away gracious ſouls from God, but rather draw them nearer unto him; they ſeldome or never think themſelves near enough unto God, its Sun, and Sheild, and Center. O that I knew where to find him, that I might come even to his Seat. And Gods Judgment-ſeat, where he ſits to hear and determine Cauſes, is not terrible or unapproachable to a Beleiver, who knows it to be a Throne of Mercy, as *Job* did here. And happy are all that can ſay ſo; *For we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11. and it will be terrible to all thoſe that do not often reſort thither before hand. And it is good to have our hearts and mouths fill'd with Arguments, when we come to plead, and expoſtulate, and reaſon out our great concernments with our God; who hath all good things lying ready by him, and waits only for Prayer to come and fetch them away. Not that God ſtands in need of our informing him concerning our neceſſities, which he knows better then we; but becauſe hereby we give ſome proof, that we are not altogether ſtrangers at home (as many careleſs ones are), but know ſomething of our ſelves and our own caſes, and of him and his dealings towards us. If our mouths then be fill'd with arguments, we may be ſure of an Anſwer. God will not ſit ſtill and ſay nothing, he will not ſit like an Image, like a dumb Idol,

Idol, as the Abominations of the Heathens, their *Dii Stercorei*, their Dunghil Gods (as they are called, *Deut.* 29. 17.) muſt of neceſſity do, they can do no otherwiſe, though men fill their mouths with Arguments, and empty their veins of their blood before them, 1 *King.* 18. 28. Go boldly then to the Throne of grace, plead with God, and fill your mouthes with arguments; ſpread thy complaints before him, and open thy cauſe unto him, for when ever you do ſo, beyond all, peradventure, God will anſwer; There's no fear that he will interpret this ſawcineſs and preſumption in thee, and ſo anſwer thee with his fiſts about thine ears, or with his foot to kick thee out of his preſence; there is no fear that he will ſmother thee under the waight of his greatneſs, or dazle thee with his beams, or burn thee with his flames, or drive thee from the judgement ſeat, as *Gallio* did the Jews, Act. 18. 16. No, he never beats his people lower then their knees, and thence ſuffers them, yea, helps them to riſe again; nay, he will lay his hand upon thy head; yea, under thy feet to do thee good; he will ſtroke rather then ſtrike a pleading ſoul; He will ſtrengthen thee, and put mettle into thee; He will not plead againſt thee with his great and abſolute power.

So he dealt with *Daniel* a man that had great intimate acquaintance with God, *Chap.* 10. 19. How was he ſtrengthened when the Angel touched him; The Righteous may plead and diſpute with him, even at the bar of Equity and Juſtice, and the Judge cannot but pronounce and paſs ſentence in their favour; Thus righteous *Jeremiah* pleaded with

with him; *Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee*, Jer. 12. 1. And he invites his people to come and plead freely, *Isa.* 43. 26. *Put me in remembrance, saith the Lord, let us plead together, declare, that thou mayst be justified; if thou haste any thing to say for thy self, say on.* Yea, Idolaters shall have this permission, to plead for themselves and their dumb Idols, if they have any thing to say for them, *Isa.* 41. 21. *Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of* Jacob, Shall Idolaters have this liberty, and not the true Worshippers, that worship him in Spirit and in truth? The wicked shall they have it, and not the righteous? Yes doubtless, this is that boldness of speech, 2 *Cor.* 7. 4. mentioned as the great priviledge of the Saints, especially now under the new Testament, *Heb.* 4. 16. *Accedamus cum loquendi ubertate ad thronum gratiæ* Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, *Heb.* 10. 19. Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (a right and freedom to enter in with our persons hereafter, and now by our Prayers) let us draw neer with a true heart, with full assurance of faith; He hath given us two great friends of his for our Advocates, the one at his own right hand in heaven, moving and negotiating, and always appearing for us; the other seated in our breasts, his holy Spirit, making intercession for us. Yea, the Fathers own heart is full of love, brim full, and running over, and he loves to hear his children reason it out with him; and he doth of set purpose delay to grant their requests sometimes, because he loves to hear often from them, to hear their voices, and see their

their faces, *Cant.* 2. 14. to hear what they can say for themselves: and so he dealt with the woman of *Canaan*, in those several repulses he gave her, *Mat.* 15. 22, 23. Acquaint thy self then with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee, *Job* 22. 21. O the secret, intimate, and heavenly familiarity, that is betwixt God and the gratious beleiving soul; It is said of *Moses*, that the Lord spake unto him face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, *Exod.* 33. 11. That is, plainly, familiarly. The like phrase is used of speaking mouth to mouth. *My servant* Moses (saith the Lord) *is not so, who is faithful in all mine house; With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches*, Numb. 12. 7, 8. Well then, if thou makest God thy habitation, thou wilt not, thou canst not be a stranger to God, thou wilt have some intimacy with him, some secret talk and communion with him; thou wilt ever and anon be opening thy heart unto him, and be pleading and expostulating the case with him. *Daniel* could not be restrained from this, though he knew the decree or writing was signed, that whosoever should ask any petition of any God or Man for thirty days, save of the King *Darius*, he should be cast into the Den of Lyons. But he goes into his House and kneels upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime, *Dan.* 6. 10. he would rather dye then omit his wonted Worship, and that close intimate communion he had with the Lord in prayer. And it must needs be so; for howsoever natural men and worldlings, out of their obnoxiousness and secret terror do slavishly retire,

and

and do not willingly, neither dare they draw near to that God, which to them is a consuming fire, *Heb.* 12. 29. Yet all these, who have truly tasted how gracious the Lord is, shall find their hearts out of a secret sence of Gods love unto them first, kindly inflamed with infinite desire to live under the comfortable influence of his pleased countenance, to enjoy his holy Majesty with constant peace, and an humble spiritual access and acquaintance continually. His spirit of Prayer, infinite love, yea, all his loving kindness, protections, preservations, bounty, patience, divine illuminations, spiritual blessings, exercise of repentance, temptations and troubles from Satan, pressures and oppressions from the world, loss of inward peace, faintness of faith, want of spiritual strength, assault of some special sin, sweetness of meditation, daily favours showred down without number, and above measure, the forethought of the great and last account, motions of the blessed spirit, spiritual desertion, &c. but above all, the unutterable, and inexpressible blessedness, goodness, and excellency of that highest Majesty it self, are, and should be quickening and powerful motives to drive us frequently and incessantly unto God.

Object. But perhaps thou wilt say; It is true, the righteous may be thus familiar with him, plead with him, and not be cast in their suit; But where are those righteous ones? And who are they? for it is not so with me; God be merciful to me a greivous sinner; I dare not be so bold with him; Mine iniquity stops my mouth.

Answ.

Answ. I answer, Every one that hath a share in, yea, a sincere desire after the righteousness of Christ, is righteous before him, and may in that righteousness plead and prevail, and as a Prince have power with God: For this is his own righteousness, of his own contrivance and appointment. *The righteousness which is of God by faith*, Phil. 3. 8, 9. A righteousness spun and woven out of his own bowels, and the obedience of his dear Son, a better then ever came upon the back of Angels; for which the personal and legal righteousness of a *Paul*, of an Angel is to be abandoned; *Evangelical* being far better then *Angelical righteousness*. Thou canst not miss a blessing in his garments, who is not ashamed to be called thine Elder Brother; who came to change cloaths and places with thee, and to take all upon himself, that thou mightest escape. The Father cannot but be well pleased with the smell of his Sons raiment: and he sits too upon a Seat of Judgement, and must do thee right; and Justice it self (which will not be twice paid) is as much for thee, as much thy freind as Mercy, *Rom.* 3. 26. *He is just*, and yet (nay therefore) *a justifier of him that beleiveth in Jesus*. So that if thou art not utterly shut up in unbeleif, if there be but the least spark of true faith alive in thy heart, thou mayst go boldly, and plead, and prosper.

Object. 2. But I have nothing to say for my self, my heart is dryed up like a Potsheard, and withered like grass; I have sin'd away all arguments, and must never open my mouth any more before him.

Answ. True, not to boast, but to plead thou mayst. And hast thou nothing to offer? not a sigh? nor the groanings of thy soul? *Let the sigh-*

ings of the Prisoner come before thee (saith *David*) *Psal.* 79. 11. And *for the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise* (saith the Lord himself) *Psal.* 12. 5. *I will set him at safety, from him that puffeth at him.* We own help from the spirit, when we are enlarged. He helps us, even when we are straightned. *Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought* (no not *Paul* and the Apostle) *but the spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered,* Rom. 8. 26. with unutterable straightnings: Our enlargements may be but the flowings of the Gifts of the Spirit, but our inward pinchings and coarctations, may be the Intercession of the Spirit it self, the more immediate operations of the Spirit.

And we forget that there is such a Prompter behind the Hangings, such an Interpreter (as his Title signifies, as well as a Comforter; *Ille suggerit vobis omnia, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance,* Joh. 14. 26.) such an Interpreter, I say, to make known the mind of God to us, and ours to him; and as he betrayes the secrets of God to the Saints, so he rips up their hearts before God, and fills there mouths, not only with windy words, but weighty arguments. Hast thou nothing then to complain of before thy Maker? No Sin, no Devil? no Diabolical Temptations? no stronge unmortified corruptions? no Spiritual Plunderers? no *Egyptian* Task-masters? no Cruel Bondage, that maketh thy life bitter to thee? no Enemy coming in as a flood to oppress and do the wrong? No Iron-yoke

that

that galls thy ſhoulders? no violence and ſpoil to cry out and complain of? Sure thou haſt not ſtudied thine own caſe, thou haſt not ordered thy cauſe aright, if this fountain fail thee.

Object. But all Complaints are troubleſome, men cannot endure them.

I *Anſwer*, God will. *Out of the abundance of my complaint, and greif have I ſpoken hitherto*, ſays *Hanna*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 16. and you know how ſhe ſped.

4ly. A Mans Houſe is the place of his Recreation, Delectation or delight. Where do men recreate and delight themſelves ſo much (I ſpeak as to ordinary and daily recreations and delights) as in their own Habitations and Dwellings? Where are thoſe intercourſes of delights between Man & Wife, but in their Domeſtick habitation? where are thoſe reciprocal actions of Conjugal affections demonſtrated ſo much as at home in their own houſes? they eat and drink together, they commune and converſe together, they ſleep and ſolace themſelves together, they joy and rejoyce together; yea, where true conjugal love is, they would not onely live, but they would dye together.

Even ſo it is with the Soul, that makes God his habitation. O the intercourſe of delights that is betwixt God, Chriſt, his Spirit, and the gracious beleiving ſoul. What elſe doth the Book of the *Canticles* or *Song of Solomon* hold forth? What does it contain as the cheif matter thereof, but a moſt excellent Marriage Song, by way of Dialogue between Chriſt and his Church? Chriſt as the Bridegroom, and the Church as his Spouſe or Bride; under the Type or Figure of *Solomon*, and his Spouſe or Bride: In which Song, in flouriſh-

ing Allegorical and Rhetorical words; the true hearty love, and the moſt excellent benefits and favours of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Bridegrome, unto the Chriſtian Church his Spouſe or Bride. And on the other ſide, the earneſt and hearty longings of the Spouſe his Church, after her beloved Bridegroom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is ſingularly demonſtrated and held forth.

In it the Bridegroom and his Bride do highly extol and praiſe each other. The Bride to ſet forth his excellent dignity, his riches, and glory, with all thoſe ſweet things that flow unto her from him; ſhe doth bring in all the ſtatelieſt, the richeſt, the goodlieſt, and the ſweeteſt things under heaven. The like doth He in praiſing her beauty, and her delectable ſweetneſs.

From hence doth ſpring the great delight and pleaſure, which the one taketh in the other, where they do (as it were) unfold the vehement paſſions of their Love with that fervent deſire which ſhe hath to be moſt nearly joyned unto him, and to dwell with him for ever. Alſo there do many goodly tokens paſs between them: For he beſtoweth upon her very rich jewels and heavenly ornaments, to deck and to beautifie her withal; and ſhe again rendreth unto him, the ſweet fruits of her love. *Let him kiſs me* (ſaith the Spouſe) *with the kiſſes of his mouth for thy love is better then wine. Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his Chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more then wine: the upright love thee. Tell me, O*

thou

thou whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt? Then in the 8th. *verſ.* Chriſt highly commends her beauty, terming her the faireſt among women, and under ſeveral compariſons he doth highly praiſe and extol her, *Chap.* 1. So *Cap.* 4. even the whole thereof, ſave a verſe or two, is the ſpeech of the Bridegroom, conſiſting in praiſes and commendations of the Bride, in declaration of his love towards her. *Behold thou art fair my Love, behold thou art fair, thou haſt Doves eyes within thy locks*, verſ. 1. *Thou art all fair, my Love, there is no ſpot in thee*, verſ. 7. *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck*, verſ. 9. *How fair is thy love, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, how much better is thy love then wine? and the ſmell of thine ointments then all ſpices? Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the hony-comb: hony and milk are under thy tongue, and the ſmell of thy garments is like the ſmell of* Lebanon, *verſ.* 10, 11. — So *Chap.* 6, 7. How does the Lord Jeſus give forth very great and ſingular commendations of his ſpouſe, teſtifying his great love and hearty affection towards her: *Thou art beautiful, O my Love, as* Tirzah, *comely as* Jeruſalem, *&c. My Dove, my undefiled is but one, ſhe is the only one of her Mother, ſhe is the choiſe one off her that bare her*, &c. *How beautiful are thy feet with ſhoes, O Princes daughter? the joynts of thy thighs are like jewels*, and ſo goes on in a deſcription of the Churches graces. And in *Chap.* 7. 6. *How fair, and how pleaſant art thou, O Love, for delights?* And having praiſed the beauty and comelineſs of his Spouſe by ſeveral parts, he breaks forth into an admiration and great wonderment of her beauty, in the whole or in all

laid together. *They be rare things, that Princes upon earth do wonder at: most rare which the Kings of Kings hath in admiration.* I instance this, to let you see the mutual solace and delight, that is betwixt Christ and the gratious soul.

And surely, if thou hast tasted that the Lord is gratious thou canst not but take sweet delight, contentation and delectation in him. *Cant.* 2. 3. *I sate down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* The shadow of a tree (as all men know) is very comfortable, and doth refresh those that are parched with the scorching heat of the Sun. When the Church is under hot persecutions and fiery temptations of Satan, and the burning heat of Gods wrath for sins guilt in the conscience; what, but Christ can be as a shadow to refresh, *Mat.* 11. 20. *There shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat,* Isa. 4. 6. *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,* Isa. 25 4. And this was not all, but saith the Spouse, *His fruit was sweet to my taste,* or to my pallate.

She doth not only receive comfortable refreshing shadow from this fruitful tree, but she eateth of the Apples also which it beareth, and the same are sweet and pleasant to her taste: Which is another benefit the Spouse enjoyeth by Christ; To wit, that she is not only freed and delivered from evil, but made partaker of his goodness; in that all the works of his Prophesie, Preisthood, and Kingdom; his Death, Resurrection, Ascention, and all the fruits of them are communicated unto her

her by the Gospel; which she feedeth upon by faith, to the abundant refreshing and satisfaction of her soul.

Fruits signifying good works and the Graces of Gods Spirit, which are to the benefit of our selves and others, *Mat.* 3. 8, 10. *Gal.* 5. 22. which is also applied to the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Joh.* 15. 16. and signifieth a comfortable reward, *Psal.* 58. 11. and *Prov.* 27. 18. So *David* he expresseth his delight in God, by the Delight he took in his words or promises rather, *How sweet are thy words unto my taste? yea, sweeter then honey to my mouth*, Psal. 119. 103. How sweet? I am not not able to express the sweetness of them. How sweet unto my taste, unto my mouth? that is, unto the mouth of my heart and soul, for otherwise the spiritual promises yeild but little sweetness unto the bodily mouth. *They are more sweet and pleasant unto my mind, then honey is to my mouth.* He meaneth, that he never tasted any meat with his mouth, how good or pleasant soever it were, as he felt Gods word sweet and comfortable to his soul.

To which agrees that in *Psal.* 19 8, 10. *The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart. More to be desired are they then gold; yea, then much fine gold, sweeter also then the honey, and the honey-comb.* And in *Psal.* 119. 11. *Thy Testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever: for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Yea, so delighted was he in the Lord, that he would never think of him, but his meditation of him should be sweet, *Psal.* 104. 34. His soul should be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and his mouth should praise him with joyful lips; when he remembred God upon his bed, and medi-

tated on him in the night watches, *Psal.* 63. 5, 6. What more pleasant and delectable to the palate then marrow and fatness? and such was the meditation of God to his soul, even in the night watches, in the darkest and most dismal season of Gods dispensations.

To this agrees that in *Psal.* 36. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.* There's a river of pleasures and delights that flow from God, which as a well of living waters, and an ever-springing in-exhaustible fountain of life and all divine graces, can never be drawn dry; but the streams thereof are always running, *To make glad the City of God*, Psal. 46. 4. Hence it is that the souls Communion with Christ, and its spiritual participating of Christ in his Ordinances, is held forth under the term of Supping with Christ. *If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*, Revel. 3. 20. I will communicate my self unto him, have mutual fellowship with him; I will dwell in him spiritually, really, operatively by my grace; and he shall dwell in me by faith, feed upon me, receive strength and nourishment from me, and so come to participate of my divine nature.

Hereby then mayst thou come to know whether thou makest God thy Habitation or not: Men take delight in their habitations, there they solace and recreat themselves; and Husband and Wife take mutual comfort and contentation in each other. Consider then what delight thou hast in God, in Christs in his way and worship, his ordinances and holy

holy appointments, *Job* 27. 10. Doſt thou take delight in approaching to God? Is thy delight in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doſt thou meditate day and night? *Pſal.* 1. 2. *Rom.* 7. 22. Are his teſtimonies thy delight and thy counſellours? *Pſal.* 119. 24. Is his word unto thee, the joy and rejoycing of thine heart? as it was to that good Prophet *Jeremiah*, Jer. 15. 16. And doſt thou delight to do the will of God, as Chriſt did his Fathers, *Pſal.* 40. 8. What fellowſhip and ſociety is there betwixt Chriſt and thy Soul? *Our fellowſhip* (ſaith *John*) *is with the Father, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. The baptized and new added members to the Church, continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, *Act.* 2. 41, 42. They held communion with Chriſt, and each with other in breaking of bread, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. They aſſembled together, prayed together, praiſed God together, ſung together, ſuffered and rejoyced together, *Act.* 4. 31. *and* 2. 47. *and* 16. 25. *and* 5. 41.

Conſider then, what entertainment thou haſt with Chriſt, does he invite thee to come unto him? and does he bid thee welcome when thou comeſt? does he bid thee eat that which is good? and that thy ſoul ſhould delight it ſelf in fatneſs? *Iſa.* 55. 1, 2. Waſt thou never at dinner or ſupper with him, when he killed his beaſts, mingled his wine, and furniſhed his table? and hath he not bade thee to eat of his bread, and drink of the wine which he hath mingled? *Prov.* 9. 1, 2, 5. Chriſt keeps a plentiful table, you'l hardly find ſuch another noble and generous houſe-keeper. When he prepares a dinner, he kills his oxen and his fatlings,

fatlings, *Mat.* 22. 4. and will entertain thee with a second course also; He has his fruit thats very sweet to the taste, his flagons and his apples, the one to stay thee, the other to comfort thee. And as Princes and great Persons have, he has a noble Banquetting house too, or house of wine for to welcome thee; and if then he finds thee but a little sick of love, he will not shun to put his left-hand under thy head, and with his right-hand to embrace thee; yea, his Banner over thee shall be love, *Cant.* 2. 3, 4, 5, 6.

But now if there be no such intercourses of love and mutual delight betwixt Christ and thy soul? If thou art still a stranger unto him, and knowst not what it is to have communion with him, or to be supping with him? If when he has bidden thee to the wedding, and hath made all things ready, and sent out his servants to call thee, and thou shalt make light of it, and refuse to come, and chuse rather to go to thy Farm or Merchandise, and be feeding still upon thy husks, or be making excuses, and telling him thou hast bought five yoke of oxen, and that thou must go to prove them; or hast married a Wife, and therefore thou canst not come: Or if thou shouldst do worse then this, take his servants and entreat them spightfully and slay them, *Mat.* 22. 5, 6. comp. with *Luk.* 14. 16. Let me tell thee, thou wilt incense him greatly, even to send forth his Armies to destroy thee. I say, if thy heart is dead, and drowsie, and estranged to God; and void of love, and dutiful affections to Christ; thou art far from dwelling in the secret place of the most high, and making him thy habitation.

5. A mans house is the chief place of his negotiation and commerce; where does a man drive his trade, and utter his commodities, but at home, in his house or in his shop? So it is with the soul that makes God his habitation; he drives a special trade and commerce with God; makes Religion his business; Christ invites all to come and buy of his Commodities, and he exposes rich commodities to sale, and there are souls that do trade and traffick with him, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price; Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your Labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, &c.* Christ excites and stirs up all that do thirst, and greatly long after righteousness, being sensible of their own sins, their nothingness and unworthiness to come unto him, as to the fountain of living waters, that is, by faith to beleive on him, and *then out of his belly* (saith he) *shall flow rivers of living water, but this spake he of the spirit*, Joh. 7. 37. He invites all, I say, that are money-less, and poor worthless, helpless, and meritless creatures, to come unto him and buy those heavenly goods which he offers unto us by the Gospel; namely, wine and milk, that is, all things requisite and necessary for our spiritual life; the graces and fruits of the spirit, which are sweet and delightful as wine; and which are as necessary to a heavenly life, as milk is to this natural life, and may take in also forgiveness of sins, and the pure and unspotted righteousness of Christ

(which

(which are given us of God in him, and that freely for nought, and without any merits and deſerts of ours) together with life eternal. *And wherefore* (ſaith he) *do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? or waigh out your money for that which is not bread?* Wherefore are ye at ſo great coſt and charges in vain, and take pains and toil to no purpoſe, for dry, empty, husky, unſatisfying, unfruitful and unprofitable things? which when you have them, and enjoy them, will miniſter no true comfort, nor ſatisfaction unto your ſoul. How vain and profuſe was the Prodigal, to waſte his ſubſtance with riotous living, to purchaſe to himſelf a few husks, unſatisfying food, which the ſwine did eat; which when he had them, was ready to periſh with hunger, *Luk.* 15. 13, 17. Of ſuch the Lord complain'd by the Prophet *Haggai*, *Ye have ſown much, and bring in little: ye eat, but ye have not enough: ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink: ye cloth you, but there is none warm: and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag of holes*, Hag. 1. 6. A ſore judgment to beſtow ones labour and pains for that which ſatisfieth not. *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes* (ſaith *Solomon*) *upon that which is not*, Prov. 23. 5. what is that which is not? the *verſ.* before tells us. He exhorts that we labour not to be rich, and that we ceaſe from our own wiſdom. What are riches nothing? nor a mans own wiſdom nothing? which the world ſo highly eſteems of, and ſo eagerly purſueth after: No, they are nothing, that is, as it were nothing, they are not matters or things of any great importance, for thee to ſet thine eyes upon; and therefore thou

ſhouldſt

shouldst not so greedily gape after them, or set thine eyes or heart upon them; because, when thou hast attained them, thou hast got as much as a thing of nothing: And adds another reason, taken from the uncertainty of riches. *For riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards heaven:* that is, they fly swiftly away. The Eagle flyeth so swiftly on high towards heaven, as that he is soon vanished away out of a mans sight, so do riches suddenly perish and vanish away; being subject to fire and water, evil debters, and many other casualties. And therefore cease from thine own wisdom, which may rather be called *distrust* in God, and *covetousness* then wisdom; when it shall violently carry thee away with a desire after riches, which are so transitory and vain. And therefore it is that Jesus Christ does invite these foolish traders to come and buy of his wares, of his commodities, that are not fading and perishing. *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live.* As much as if Christ did say, if you will come and trade with me, you shall be sure to have good substantial commodities, no braided wares; you shall have that which will stand by you, and be of special use and advantage unto you. *Hear and your souls shall live', and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you', even the sure mercies of* David, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. And these commodities of mine, you may have for the fetching, I don't expect ready money for them, I'le let you have them upon trust, and see how well you will improve them; but be assured they are lasting

lasting commodities, sound wares that will not fail you; *Riches and honours are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness; my fruit is better then gold, yea, then fine gold; and my revenue then choise silver; I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures*, Prov. 8. 18, 19, 20, 21. Mark, I pray you, *Riches and honours are with me*, saith Christ, that is, true riches and honour, such as will not fade and flye away, and they are with me, in my power to give and bestow them, when and upon whom I list; even durable riches, such as shall continue, when other mens shall melt away as wax before the Sun; And those that love me, that is, those that do unfainedly love me, shall inherit substance, that which is durable; meaning such wealth or substance as is such really and indeed, and bringeth to man the greatest happiness and prosperity, even eternal life, that endureth for ever. Thus you see, there is a trade, that Christ and the beleiving soul does drive together, and all Christs commodities, they are rich substantial commodities, whoever have them shall inherit substance; not shadows but substance, like unto the Merchandise of *Tyre*, whose Merchandise and hire shall be holiness to the Lord, and shall be for them that dwell before the Lord (whose habitation the Lord is, mark that) to eat sufficiently, and for durable cloathing, *Isa.* 23. 18. What can be better then satisfying food, and lasting cloathing, like the *Israelites* cloaths in the Wilderness, which waxed not old, *Deut.* 29. 5. The necessity and excellency of which, the Lord Jesus sets forth in that

that exhortation of his to the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayst be rich; and white rayment, that thou mayst be cloathed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayst see.* I counsel thee to buy of me (saith Christ) from whence observe that; all true spiritual riches and graces, (all substantial commodities) are to be fetched from Christ alone. Christ sends us not to our own works, or to his blessed Mother, or to any other Saint departed, with so many *Ave Marias*, to many *Pater Nosters*, or so many *Vows*, and *Pilgrimages*, to buy them at their hands, but he bids us; Come buy them of me; Christ alone is the great dispenser of his Fathers treasure, all power is given into his hands, and in vain it is to seek the Kingdom of God, or the treasures thereof, but in, by, and through the Son; and it is most just it should be so, it being the purchase of his death and passion, he powred out his soul unto death for us, that he might have power to heal our souls of all their infirmities; therefore he is made unto us, both wisdom, justification, sanctification, and all in all. And what are those precious commodities that Christ would have this Church of *Laodicea*, and us also (if we be found in the same vain-glorious, yet beggerly condition, as she was in) to buy of him? Surely, even such as might be a remedy proportionable to her disease.

1. Here is gold, not outward glittering, or pretended gold, but tryed gold offered, to help her of her poverty.

2. Here

2. Here is white rayment, a glorious rayment, of Christs righteousness offered, to cover her shame and nakedness.

3. Here is eye-salve offered, even true knowledge and wisdom from above, the spirits divine illumination to cure her of her blindness, that she might see the way to everlasting happiness. And the manner of seeking and obtaining these rich commodities is as it were by bargain and sale; *I counsel thee to buy of me*; And let us inquire a little how this bargain is made up.

First, Understand in all legal contracts, there is an agreement of both parties, or else it cannot be a bargain.

Secondly, In some bargains and contracts, there is a legal consideration, given for the thing bargained for, either to the full value, or somewhat equitably, proportionable thereunto; Or,

Thirdly, There are other absolute bargains and sales of Lands and Goods, disposed therein freely, onely on the consideration of the Donors or Granters, love, affection, and preferment to the parties beloved, and so given freely to them and their heirs for ever, without so much as paying a Penny by way of legal retribution for it; Yea, the Donor often is so free in his deed of gift, that the Donee is freed of all fear of forfeiture of his estate; for there is not reserved so much as a Rose or Pepper-corn by way of Rent, that for non-payment thereof the state should become forfeited. And that party that would not be thankful to such a free-giver, is worse then an Infidel.

Now

Now to apply this to our heavenly bargain: If we will buy of Christ gold and heavenly treasure, we must first come unto him, and strike up the bargain with him. He will not sell unto us against our wills (though he himself must make us first willing) and therefore he crys, as before, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Come unto the waters, come ye, buy and eat.* And *Revel.* 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that is a thirst, Come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of Life freely.* And they now that will not be obedient to the commands and laws of this gratious Donor, by way of gratitude and thankfulness, for so glorious and free an Inheritance bestowed upon them; are not worthy of the least mercy in his kingdom.

If this inheritance were entailed on us, on condition of payment or performance of a small petty grain of Corn, or the like, as is the mite of our faith and obedience, we should be in bondage, fear and danger all our life long, if not, at least forfeit all by our non-payment and performance: Therefore blessed be God, that hath not left our salvation in our own hands, but founded it on Christ, the rock which cannot be removed. Now he that goes about to buy a great Treasure, is very careful, diligent, and his affections intense upon it, that none put him by of his bargain: So it must be here for this Heavenly Treasure, we must be earnest with Christ to strike up this bargain, we must not let him alone by our prayers, until we have obtained this precious pearl at his hand. 'Tis true, Christ will sell us this pearl freely, yet we must agree with him for it; though we have nothing to give him in the least, by way of legal compensa-

tion for it, yet me must buy it, receive it in his own way and method.

If you will buy any goods, that you want, you must repair to the Fair, House, or Place where it is to be bought: So if you want tryed gold to inrich you, or garments to cover you, or eye-salve to inlighten you; you must come to Christ, who is the Merchant of these heavenly wares, upon his Fair-days, or when he opens shop, when such precious wares are set to sale: To his Ordinances, in his Assemblies on the publique days of his heavenly Bartering, if you will attain unto this heavenly Treasure?

And these are Commodities worth the buying, the tryed gold that comes from Christ is such that makes the soul truly gratious where it is; and it is truly refined gold, because it is the wisdome and way of God, which is as gold refined, *Prov.* 8. 10. and *Psal.* 12. 6. It is tryed, and therefore will hold water; we may become rich in the eyes of the world, in parts, abilities, and humane learning; and they may shine like gold in the eyes of the in-judicious, simple and ignorant: but alas, if Christ doth not sanctifie them unto us, they may make us the worse, not the better for them. So for the white garment that must cloath us. Christs garment is such a garment that will reach us from top to toe, that no part of our shame or nakedness shall appear.

Sin brings shame, and sin brings contempt and nakedness upon us; and Christs raiment is a white raiment, an innocent raiment, a glorious honourable raiment; which will not only cover all our shame and nakedness, that the pure eyes of God shall

ſhall not behold it, *Iſa.* 61. 10. but therein alſo (he having granted thee to be arrayed therewith) will preſent thee therein glorious to himſelf, without ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, *Eph.* 5. 27. and therefore ſurely it is worth the buying: our own raiments are ſpotted, defiled, and will not ſerve the turn, but Chriſts is white all over. If we expect to appear perfectly righteous, holy and juſt before God (or otherwiſe we ſhall never appear before him to approbation and abſolution, for no unclean thing ſhall enter into his preſence) then we muſt be ſure to cloath our ſelves in the white raiment of this our Elder Brother.

So for the Eye-ſalve, with which our eyes muſt be anointed, if we will be cured of our blindneſs, and ſee the way to everlaſting happineſs. Surely this is of excellent uſe, and worth the buying, and where are we to get it but from Chriſt? *He is given for a Covenant to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring out the Priſoners from the Priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the Priſon-houſe, to lead them in the paths of life*, Iſa. 42. 6, 7. and *Pro.* 8. 20. Its in vain to go to our own prudence or carnal wiſdom, that will more entangle us, and darken us, and lead us out of the way, according to that of Chriſt, *Joh.* 9. 39. *I am come into this world for Judgment, that they that ſee not, ſhould ſee; and that they that ſee* (that is, in their own wiſdom) *ſhould be made blind.* Chriſt made an Eye-ſalve for the cure of the blind perſon, *Joh.* 9. 6. of his ſpittle and clay, a compound matter, proceeding from his mouth and the earth, whereby he made the blind man ſee: Chriſt ſome-

what follows the ſame method, in his compoſitions of Eye-ſalve, which he uſes towards his ſpiritual blind ſouls that he takes to cure:

Firſt, He gives us the knowledge of our ſelves, and of our own earthly matter, and that we ſavour in our unregeneracy, nothing but of earth and earthlineſs.

Next he brings us to the knowledge of himſelf and his word, which proceedeth out of his mouth; and ſo makes us a happy compoſition and Eye-ſalve; whereby we come to ſee our poverty, our ſhame and nakedneſs, and all our ſpiritual wants; and alſo where remedy is to be had, to heal and to ſave us from all our maladies.

And indeed, this is as great a bleſſing as Chriſt can beſtow upon us, to be truly ſenſible, and to have a clear ſight of our condition, it is the next ſtop to amendment, it is ignorance and blindneſs that makes us err and go aſtray; but true ſaving knowledge will keep us cloſe to Gods Commandements. If we take any other Eye-ſalve to anoint our eyes with, ſave what Chriſt hath prepared for us in the Treaſury of his Word, we may take Bird-lime inſtead of Eye-ſalve, which will cloſe our eyes the faſter. They are not the traditions of men, nor the wiſdom and underſtanding of the wiſe that will make this precious ointment; but it is a ſpiritual extraction and ointment, drawn out by the ſpirit of Chriſt, out of the holy Limbeck of his Word, and applyed by him unto the blind patient; that will make him ſee the glory of God and his grace, and to praiſe him for it to all eternity.

Thus you ſee there are rich and precious commodities to be had in Chriſt, and Chriſt ſets them

to

to ſale, and invites us to come and buy them of him; and there is a ſpiritual and heavenly commerce that is driven betwixt Chriſt and the beleiving ſoul: And no marvail, for where elſe ſhall the ſoul in all its exigents and ſtraights have recourſe, if not unto Chriſt? *In whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. *And in whom dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, verſ. 9. And as he is full of grace and truth, ſo it is, *Of his fulneſs that we all receive, and grace for grace*, Joh. 1. 14, 16. Thus I have ſhewed you in ſeveral particulars, what it is to dwell in the Secret Place of the moſt high, and what it is to make God our Habitation.

1. To have our fixed Habitation and Abode in God.

2. To make God our Refuge and Strength.

3. To make God the place of our Secret Retirement.

4. To make him the Place, or Object of our delight.

5. To make him the Place of our Negotiation and Commerce.

Which to do, will aſſuredly intitle and intereſt us in the promiſes of protection and preſervation, even from this ſore Viſitation of the Lord, the noiſome Peſtilence, *Pſal.* 91. 1, 3. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty. Surely, he ſhall deliver thee from the ſnare of the fowler: and from the noyſome Peſtilence. He ſhall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt: his truth ſhall be thy ſheild and buckler. Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terrour by night: nor for the ar-*

row that flyeth by day: nor for the Pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day. So in the 9, 10. vers. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high thy habitation: There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.* Which promises, though it cannot be denied, but they had a special reference unto Christ, yet so to Christ, as not excluding his members.

For the head cannot be severed from the body, but head and members make one perfect and entire body. Now if we are the Body of Christ, and Christ the Head of this Body; as so it is, *Col.* 1. 18, 24. then surely all the good and comfort that the head partakes of, cannot but be communicable to the rest of the body. *For from the head, all the body by joynts and bands having nourishment ministred and knit together, encreaseth with the encrease of God,* Col. 2. 19. So that I conceive there is not a promise in the Word of God, that is made unto Christ the Head, but all the members of his Body are interessed and concern'd in it. And so much does the prayer of our deer Lord import. *That they all may become one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one with us. I in them, and thou in me, that thy may be made perfect in one,* Joh. 17. 21, 23.

Is it promised to Christ that he shall have a kingdom, and that all People, Nations and Languages shall serve him? *Dan.* 7. 14. *Psal.* 72. 11. The same is promised to the Saints, that shall out-live Anti-christs rage and tyranny, *Dan.* 7. 21, 27. *Isa.* 60. 14. Is it promised unto Christ, that they that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him

him, and his enemies ſhall lick the duſt? *Pſal.* 72. 9. The ſame is promiſed unto the Saints, who ſhall continue faithful to Chriſt in the latter day, *Iſa.* 60. 14. *and* 49. 23. *and Revel.* 3. 9. Is it promiſed that thoſe that will not, he ſhall raign over them, ſhall be deſtroyed? And that God will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him? *Luk.* 19. 27. *Pſal.* 89. 23. The like is promiſed to the Jewiſh and Gentile Goſpel-church in the latter day. To wit, *That the Nation and Kingdom that will not ſerve her ſhall periſh, yea, thoſe Nations ſhall be utterly waſted,* Iſa. 60. 12. Is it promiſed to Chriſt, *That he ſhall break his enemies with a rod of Iron, and daſh them in peices, like a potters veſſel?* Pſa. 2 9 *Rev.* 19. 15. The very ſame is promiſed to the Goſpel-ſuffering, enduring, over-coming Saints in the latter day, *Rev.* 2. 26, 27. Is it propheſied or fore-ſpoken of Chriſt, that out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, even a two edged ſword, that with it he ſhall ſmite the Nations? *Revel.* 1. 16. and *Revel.* 19. 15. The ſame is propheſied and fore-told of the Goſpel-Saints in the latter day, *Pſal.* 149. 6, 7, 8, 9. Is it promiſed to Chriſt, that God will anſwer him when he calls upon him, that he will be with him in trouble, deliver him, and honour him, And with long life will ſatisfie him, and ſhew him his ſalvation? *Pſal.* 91. 14, 15, 16. If this ſhould be applicable only to Chriſt in that place, which I conceive ought not to be; yet are the ſame promiſes made to Goſpel beleivers, in other places of Scripture, *Pſal.* 50. 15. *Iſa.* 42. 2. *and* 65. 24. *Mat.* 7. 7. *Job* 5. 19. *Pſal.* 34. 17, 19. *Joh.* 12. 26. *Eph.* 6. 2, 3.

Object. But these promises of temporal preservation and deliverance, of honour and long life, were made upon the accompt of Legal Obedience.

Answer. True, If upon the accompt of Legal, then surely upon the accompt of Evangelical obedience. *For Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. If therefore thou dwellest in the secret place of the most high, thou mayst beleive, thou shalt abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and be delivered from the noysome *Pestilence.* That is, thou mayst beleive thou shalt have glorious protections, and sweet heavenly refreshments from the Lord. Shadow signifying both protection and refreshment, as here in this place; so *Numb.* 14. 9. *Isa.* 30. 2. *Psal.* 121. 5. *Isa.* 51. 16. *and* 49. 2. *and* 4. 6. *and* 25. 4. *and* 32. 2. *Psal.* 17. 8. *and* 36. 7. And in particular, a preservation from the noysome *Pestilence.* So then, if thou makest God thy Habitation, thou mayst beleive that no evil shall befal thee, nor that any Plague shall come nigh thy dwelling; that is, no punishment or plague, no affliction, cross or calamity, shall come unto thee from the Almighty, as to hurt thee. This is the fift Spiritual Receipt, and special preservative against this Pestilential Sickness.

The Sixth Spiritual Receipt.

6ly. The sixth Soveraign Antidote and Preservative against this Infectious Disease, is this, *Get a merciful, tender, pittiful and compassionate heart.* This, as it, will demonstrate us to be like unto God himself,

himself, who is the fountain of mercy. *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Luk. 6. 36. So it will denominate us to be such as are righteous before God, *Psal.* 37. 21. who live in the power of that Religion, that is pure and undefiled before God. And surely if thy heart is melted with the sense of Gods everlasting mercy to thy self, thou canst not but have thy heart drawn forth compassionately towards such as are in misery, necessity and distress.

But if the world hath locked up thine heart, and congealed the bowels of thy compassions towards thy poor brethren; let the blaze of thine outward profession shine never so fair, and manage the duties of external holiness never so demurely, and keep the times and tasks of daily duties with never so great austerity; nay, though thou be able to amuse weaker Christians with some affected, strain'd, and artifical fervency in Prayer (for by the meer power of hypocrisie and vain-glory, a man may pray sometimes to the Admiration of others, especially less judicious) I say, for all this, if the holy heat of Brotherly love doth not warm thine heart, and upon occasion work affectionately in thy soul, thou wilt discover thy self to be rotten at the heart-root, and that there is little of the true love and grace of God in thee, or hope of salvation.

For the dissolving therefore of thy frozen heart, and the enlarging of thy bowels of pity towards the poor Brethren of Christ Jesus; without which, never think hereafter to look him in the face with comfort, or to find mercy at the great day. Consider well that place, in 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. *Who so hath this*

this worldes goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And above all other motives of mercifulness to the poor necessitous and distressed members of Christ, methinks that Argument which *Paul* presseth to this purpose, in 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. should melt the most flinty heart; *For ye know* (saith he) *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* Shall the onely dear innocent Son of the All-powerful and ever-blessed Lord and King of Heaven and Earth, disinrich as it were, and disrobe himself of the Royalty and Majesty above, and become so poor, that whereas the Foxes have holes, and the birds of the Air have nests, yet he not where to lay his head; that through his poverty, and pouring out his heart-blood, he might crown us with the inestimable riches of heavenly glory, with joys and pleasures for evermore; And shall not we worms and wretches, most unworthy the least bit of bread we put into our mouths, part with something of our superfluities, to releive the fainting soul of him for whom Christ died, and which he will take as done unto himself, *Mat.* 25. 40. Though it be but a cup of cold water only? *Mat.* 10. 42.

Besides, the last and everlasting doom at that great and dreadful day, to wit, either the glorious sentence of absolution, *Come ye blessed*; or the dreadful sentence of condemnation, *Go ye cursed, &c.* shall be pronounced upon the godly, according to the effect and fruit of their faith, which

which works by love; Or paſs upon the Reprobates for omiſſion and neglect of this moſt excellent duty of merciſulneſs to the poor members of Chriſt, *Mat.* 25. 40, 41.

Conſider withal, as an inflaming Motive to draw forth the bowels of thy compaſſions to poor needy and neceſſitous ſouls, that by laying out thy ſelf cheerfully, ſeaſonably, liberally, and yet but according to thine ability, towards ſuch, *Deut.* 15. 10. 2 *Cor.* 9. 7. *Prov.* 3. 27, 28. 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. *Prov.* 11. 25. 2 *Cor.* 8. 13, 14. *Act.* 11. 29. Thou ſhalt hereby become a Creditor, even to thy moſt glorious and bountiful Creator. For *he that hath pitty upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again*, Prov. 19. 17. Now what a Motive I ſay is this, to be merciful, that we ſhall make God himſelf our debtor, the ever-ſpringing fountain of bliſs, and Lord of all goodneſs, who doth all things like himſelf, omnipotently, bountifully, above all expectation, as becomes the mighty Soveraign of Heaven and Earth? If he works, he makes a World; If he be angry he drowns the whole face of the earth; If he love, the heart blood of his deareſt Son is not too dear; If he ſtand upon his peoples ſide, he makes the Sun to ſtand ſtill, and the Stars to fight; If he repay, he gives his own all-ſufficient ſelf, with the overflowing torrents of all pleaſures and glory through all eternity. But to bring it a little nearer to the thing in hand; Conſider a few of the Promiſes of God, as a further provocation to this ſo pious and profitable a work and ſervice for the Lord.

Wouldſt

Wouldst thou be in a thriving and prosperous state in this world, whether as to the outward or inward man? Surely, to be compassionate this way, is the very ready way; *If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry* (saith the Prophet) *and satisfie the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and break forth as the morning, and thy darkness be as the noon-day*; *and thy health shall spring forth speedily*; Mark that, *The Lord shall, guide thee continually, and satisfie thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not*, Isa. 58. 10. *and* 8. 11. *Thine horn shall be exalted with honour, and thou shalt not want*, Psa. 112. 9. Prov. 28. 27. Yea, *for this thing, the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto*, Deut. 15. 10. It will be then a profitable inquisition amongst others; when a man finds himself to go backward in his estate, whether upon the temporal or spiritual account, and Gods secret displeasure to blow upon his wealth, or afflict his body with painful diseases, to examine well, whether he was not ordinarily wont to shut up his bowels of compassion, then to pour out his soul to the poor. *For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy*, Jam. 2. 13. *But with the merciful, God will shew himself merciful*, Psa. 18. 25. Yea, saith our Saviour, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*, Mat. 5. 7. Which brings to my remembrance that pious and most affectionate wish of *Paul*, in 2 *Tim.* 1. 16, 18. *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus*, Why? *for he oft refreshed me*, said he,

he, *and was not aſhamed of my chain. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he miniſtred unto me at* Epheſus, *thou knowoſt very well.* It ſeems he was a very charitable ſoul; He did not (as many profeſſours of our times do, talk much and do little, have their mouths open, but the bowels of their compaſſions ſhut faſt enough, his readineſs to diſtribute, and willingneſs to communicate, did clearly and plainly demonſtrate, his care to lay up in ſtore for himſelf a good foundation againſt the time to come, that he might lay hold on eternal life. According to the counſel that *Paul* gives to the worldly rich men of his time, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18, 19. To which concurs that of *Solomon*, Prov. 11. 17. *The merciful man doth good to his own ſoul, but he that is cruel, troubleth his own fleſh.* The merciful man, the Hebrew it ſeems renders it, a man of mercifulneſs, of bounty, liberality; So a man of knowledge, that is, a knowing and underſtanding man; a man of truth or faithfulneſs, that is, a true or faithful man, *Neh.* 7. 2. A man of peace, that is, one that is peaceable; Men of holineſs, that is, holy men, *Exod.* 22. 31. This man that is merciful to others that are neceſſitous, and in diſtreſs; or as *James* expreſſeth it, that viſiteth the Fatherleſs and Widows in their affliction, and hides not himſelf from his own fleſh, *Iſa.* 58. 7. (For what is mercy but a pittying of others that are in miſery? Mercy and miſery being relatives, were there no want nor treſpaſs, there needed no mercy;) This man, ſaith *Solomon*, doth good to his own ſoul, or as other tranſlations have it, he rewardeth his own ſoul, he doth good unto himſelf,

ſelf, as well as unto others, for it pleaſeth God to reward the good works of his poor Servants, according to that of *Solomon*, Prov. 11. 25. *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.* And of that of our bleſſed Lord, in *Mat.* 10. 42. who brings it down to a cup of cold water onely, that this merciful man ſhall give to drink to one of his little ones, which *Mark* expounds to ſuch as belong to him, *Mark* 9. 41. *Verily, I ſay unto you*, ſaith our dear Lord, *he ſhall in no wiſe looſe his reward*; which gives us ſome light into that expreſſion of *Paul* to *Timothy*, in his advice, as before, to rich men. Of laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come; Some reads, for in ſtore, laying up for a Treaſure, a good foundation, that is, a foundation of hope; Not that the liberality of the rich does merit it, but becauſe it is a fruit of faith, and God hath promiſed to reward the ſame grace for Chriſts ſake; It being a ſacrifice with which he is well pleaſed, *Heb.* 13. 16 Or as *Paul* expreſſeth it, in *Phil.* 4. 18. An odour of a ſweet and fragrant ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable, well-pleaſing to God. For as ſweet odours are a refreſhing of the ſenſes, ſo our refreſhing of the Saints bowels, is in a manner a refreſhing of Gods own ſenſe and Spirit. A term borrowed from the perfumes which were made upon the Altar of Incenſe. I ſhall add further, but that in, *Pſa.* 41. 1, 2, 3. which I judge very pertinent to the thing in hand; *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble; The Lord will preſerve him and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſ-*

ſed

ſed upon the earth. And thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing, thou wilt make his bed in his ſickneſs.

David being now fallen into a heavy ſickneſs, or ſome other great diſtemper or ſtreight, he deſcribeth here the happineſs or bleſſing which they ſhall obtain at Gods hands, that carry themſelves piouſly and compaſſionately towards the afflicted. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, that judgeth wiſely of the poor, and will not raſhly condemn him as a Malefactor whom God doth viſit.* The poor here is taken for a miſerable one, one that is thinn, exhauſted of his abilities; whither of the body, and ſo a ſick one; or of goods and means, and ſo a poor one. *The Lord* (ſaith he) *ſhall deliver him in time of trouble.* The Lord ſhall preſerve him and keep him alive, the Lord ſhall revive, quicken, heal him or make him whole, and make him happy on the earth; and will not deliver him, or give him over into the deſire or will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of *languiſhing*, or the bed of ſorrow, others read it. The Lord ſhall under-prop him upon his ſick bed, upon his bed of faintneſs, weakneſs, feebleneſs; yea, make his bed in his ſickneſs, or change his bed, which may admit of this two-fold ſence. As if he had ſaid, ſpeaking in a prophetical manner; Thou, O God, ſhalt as ſurely turn his ſickneſs to the beſt, as if I ſaw it already performed. Or thus, thou ſhalt ſupply all humane helps unto him, that is uſed to be beſtowed upon ſick, diſeaſed and diſtempered perſons.

Now

Now what a comfortable promise is here for our faith to take hold of, in such a languishing and dying time. O how should it encourage and stir up the rich, especially in this world, *To be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18. Yea, all of us that can make out our Election of God, as holy and beloved; *To be putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ hath forgiven us, so also should we do: And above all these things* (saith the Apostle) *put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness*, Col. 3. 12, 13, 14. He wishes them, as they would be sure of their Election, and have a sound note or mark of their holiness, and that God loved them to be putting on bowels of mercies; as if he had said, let these be your robes and coverings, wear them as you wear your garments; let them be as tender and inward unto you, as your own principal and most vital parts. Such a measure of pity and compassion, as maketh the inward bowels to yearn; and this is proper to such as are in affliction and misery.

But Kindness extendeth further, and reacheth to all, whither in prosperity or adversity, which is a sweet and loving disposition of the heart, and a courteous affection to all, shewing it self in pleasing, and good speech, and behaviour towards all. But because Love is the root of all, he doth therefore compare Charity to the most precious garment, which is or can be put upon all others; Calling it, *The bond of perfectness*, or the most perfect bond, which is among men to unite them together.

together. *Vinculum perfectionis*, is, *Vinculum perfectissimum, quo plures inter se colligantur.* I shall conclude this point, with that faithful saying and affirmation of, *Jud.* 8. *and* 14. That they which have beleived in God, might be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful; they should learn to be eminent in good works above others. The *Vulgar* hath it, *Curent bonis operibus præ esse:* They should go before others in good works. And gives this as his reason therefore. *These things are good and profitable unto men.* Thus much for the Sixth Soveraign Remedy.

The Seventh Spiritual Receipt.

7ly. The seventh and last Soveraign Receipt, for the prevention or curing of this Pestilential disease; *Is an Evangelical universal obedience to the Gospel of Christ*: Called by the Apostle in *Rom.* 16. 26. *The obedience of Faith*, consisting in a readiness to do the Will of God, in things commanded or forbidden, be they never so troublesome or contrary to our reason or liking. I call it *Evangelical*, to distinguish it from that which is *Legal*; which required an absolute universal conformity, not of our actions only, but of our affections also to the will of God, exactly in every point and title thereof, upon pain of Eternal Damnation, *Gal.* 3. 10, 13. And therefore by the Apostle called, *The ministration of death and condemnation*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 9. This Evangelical Obedience, consists in beleiving the Gospel, and subjecting our selves thereunto; whence it is, that it is put for faith

or the receiving of the Gospel, *Rom.* 1. 8. Comp. with *Chap.* 16. 19. and to obey Christ, for beleiving in Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. and to obey the truth for beleiving the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Rom.* 6. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 22. Which evangelical or Gospel obedience is to be performed unto God, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, who as he is held forth to be the pattern of our obedience, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. So is he the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, *Heb.* 5. 9. And through his obedience onely it is that we are made righteous, *Rom.* 5. 19. This I say does consist in a readiness and chearfulness to do the will of God. *Lo I come* (saith Christ) *to do thy Will O God*, Heb. 10. 7. *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work*, Joh. 4. 34. And it must be performed from the heart, out of love unto Christ, *Rom.* 6. 17. Upon this hing all Gospel obedience hangs, *Rom.* 13. 10. This is the spring from whence it originally flows, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. The love of Christ constraineth us; The force and efficacy of which will make difficult things easie; The Saints loved not their lives unto the death, for the love they bore unto Christ, *Rev.* 12. 11. Jacob *served seven years for* Rachel, *and* (saith the Text) *they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had unto her*, *Gen.* 29. 20. *Charity suffereth long and is kind, it beareth all things, beleiveth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 7. *Much water cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it*, Cant. 8. 7. When the soul is mounted upon the wings of faith and charity, it makes it like the Chariots of *Aminadib*, Cant. 6. 12. It will make the soul cleave unto Christ,

as

as *Ruth* unto *Naomi* her Mother-in-law, not to leave him, nor return from following after him. It will say then unto Christ, *Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people, shall be my people; and thy God, my God; where thou diest, will I dye; and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me*, Ruth 1. 16, 17. Lord if thou goest into a Prison, saith the gratious, loving beleiving, obeying soul, I will go with thee; if thou lodgest there in a Dungeon, I will lodge with thee; I am resolved in thy strength not to leave thee, go where thou wilt; It will say as *Paul*, *None of these things shall move me, nor shall I count my life dear unto my self, so that I may but finish my course with joy; and the ministery which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testifie the Gospel of the grace of God*, Act. 20. 24. *Mount-Sion* Saints will follow the Lamb whither-soever he goeth, *Rev.* 14. 4. They have an inseperable communion, an individual society with the Lamb, which referred to the state of their warfare, notes the sincerity and constancy of their faith and obedience under Anti-christs persecution; they follow not the Beast, but the Lamb, whereſoever he goeth, that is, they exactly walk in the precepts and steps of the lamb, whereſoever he leadeth them, & he leadeth them to the Fountains of living waters, *Chap.* 7. 17. These suffers not the decres and Idols of the Beast to be obtruded upon them, but wholly cleave to Christ their guide, and like *Caleb* & *Joshua*, they will follow him fully, *Numb.* 14. 24. This indeed is very difficult in it self, and in our strength so to do. Our own experience tells us, that Gospel obedience is an

up-hill way, and its hard to get a great waight up an hill; therefore when the Apostle presseth Gospel-obedience, he bids us lay aside every weight, that we may run with patience, *Heb.* 12. 1. The old *Adam* is a clogg to our obedience, and weights easily pull us down; and if down, to rise again, it is up-hill work.

What a do have we to get up our hearts unto true Gospel-sorrow for our sins? Oh, what a hard work it is to bring our hearts up to a beleif of the promises? to trust God in difficulties, *&c.* Oh, how difficult to get up the hill of Gospel-obedience? what pains must we take to get to communion with God in the Spirit? Gods call for our obedience, is like his command to *Moses*, Deut. 32. 49, 50. *Go up to* Mount Nebo, *and dye there.* So, go up into thy Closet, and kill thy corruption there, let thy dearest lusts dye there, pluck out thy right eye there, and cut off thy right-hand there; and we had as live dy, as do such a thing, such verily is our natural stubbornness against God.

When God bids us up and do this, or that; oh, how irksome and unpleasing is it to flesh and blood. When the Gospel bids us look above all things; Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands, Houses, Life; and and leave, forsake and hate them all, and then thou shalt be a Disciple of Christ, upon the account of Gospel-obedience. Are we not ready to say with those Disciples of Christ, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* Joh. 6. 60. Yet I say, the soul that is carried upon the wings of faith and love, and strengthened with might by the Spirit of the Lord in the inward man, can chearfully and willingly conform to such harsh, difficult and unplea-

But

ſing commands, conſidered as to fleſh and blood.

But I ſhall come a little cloſer as to the thing in hand, to excite thee to this evangelical obedience.

Conſider firſt, how acceptable and well-pleaſing a thing it is unto the Lord, in that he prefers it above legal Sacrifices whatſoever. As *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul*, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voyce of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better then Sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as iniquity and Idolatry*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 22, 23. *Hoſ.* 6. 6. So *Jer.* 7. 22, 23. *For I ſpake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of* Egypt, *concerning burnt-offerings and ſacrifices; But this thing commanded I them, ſaying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counſels and imaginations of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward, &c.* And becauſe they rejected the Lords Prophets, he ſent among them, and would not hearken unto the Lord, nor incline their ear, but hardned their neck, and did worſe then their Fathers; Therefore the Prophet *Jeremy* was to ſay unto them, *This is a Nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction, truth is periſhed, and is cut off from their mouth.*

Object. But did not the Lord command their Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices after he had brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*? were they not things of his own appointment?

Answ. Yea, Surely the Lord did command and injoyn their sacrifices, and it was their sin to omit them; but the meaning is this, as if the Lord had said, This was not the chiefest thing that I commanded them, as ye Hypocrites do conceive and imagine, but it was their sincere obedience, which they have not yeilded unto me, and you have yeilded me less then they; I did expect that your forefathers should have obeyed my voice in all other things that I had enjoyned and commanded them to do, as well as in matters of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but seeing they disobeyed my voice, and yet would come and sacrifice unto me with impure hands, and unclean hearts, rebellious and disobedient spirits, their Sacrifices and Offerings to me were as if I had not commanded them at all, my soul did loath them and abominate them, and so they do yours, so long as you hearken not to my voice, but walk in the counsells and imaginations of your own evil hearts. The Prophet *Hosea* gives much light into this understanding of the mind of God, in *Hosea* 6. 6. and so does our blessed Saviour, referring his speech thereunto; *For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, more then burnt-offerings*, See *Mat.* 9. 13. *and* 12. 7. that is, I preferred works of mercy, before Sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, as it is joyned with obedience to the will of God, before burnt-offering. The outward bare offering considered in it self, without faith and repentance, the Lord highly reproved and rejected; See to this purpose, *Psa.* 50. 12, to 17. So *Isa.* 1, 11, to 15. See there how the Lord did abominate their offerings, notwithstanding he had instituted and appointed

appointed them. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?* saith the Lord, *I am full of the burnt-offerings of Rams, &c. bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me, the new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even your solemn meeting, your new Moons, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear:* And why? *Your hands are full of blood, will ye kill and murder my servants the Prophets, and shed the blood of mine innocent ones? and come and think to appease my wrath with your hypocritical offerings?* And therefore he exhorts them to repentance; *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow; Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; when these things are done, then come unto me, then bring your offerings unto me, then shall they be accepted by me, then we will reason together, then I will hear your prayers, and pardon your sins, and not before.*

Hence it is, that *Solomon* saies, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight*, Prov. 15. 8. So Prov. 21. 27. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind.* It is always evil, but how much more abominable is it, when he brings it with a wicked mind? or with a wicked intent, expressly intending to effect or accomplish some wicked act or enter-

priſe thereby; and as it were calling upon God to be an help to advance and ſet forward, their villanous and miſchievous deſignes; As *Balaam* and *Balaack* did, *Numb.* 23. *Will ye ſteal murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and burn incenſe unto* Baal, *and walk after other Gods whom ye know not*, (ſaith the Lord) *And come and ſtand before me in this houſe, which is called by my name, and ſay, we are delivered to do all theſe abominations*, Jer. 7. 9, 10. As if the Lord had ſaid, are ye not aſhamed to deal ſo hypocritically and wickedly. I do as much eſteem of ſuch ſervices and ſacrifices, as the cutting off of a Dogs neck; or the offering of Swines blood: as his expreſſion is, in *Iſa.* 66. 3. I accept not of ſuch offerings; *Take away from me the noyſe of thy ſongs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Violls; But let judgment run down as waters, and righteouſneſs as a mighty ſtream*, Amos 5. 22, 23, 24. Their vocal and inſtrumental muſick, was at that time a part of Gods inſtituted outward worſhip, but by them corrupted together with the reſt, through their hipocriſie and wickedneſs, and eſpecially through their heinous Idolatry, whereunto they abuſed their Muſick, *Amos* 8. 3. *The ſongs of the Temple ſhall be howling in that day*; I wiſh theſe things might be rightly conſidered, and applyed in this day; I am afraid, there is ſuch kind of ſervice and worſhip performed now adays, which will come under the ſharp rebuke and reprehenſion of the Lord; ſuch as God will abominate, and eſpecially if the ſame be offered with a wicked mind. To cry up the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Church of God, the Houſe of God, &c. Will be but a truſting in lying

lying words, if the men of this generation do not throughly amend their ways and their doings. This will not priviledge them, nor deliver them to do all those dreadful abominations, as are perpetrated and acted in these times. God will say, take from me the noyse of your Songs, or Singing-men, & I will not hear the melady of your Organs. They are to me but as the howling of a Dog; So on the other hand, for such as are in a congregational way, & have seperated from the publique national worship. Let them take heed that they rest not in the external part of Gods worship in outward ordinances, and Church-fellowships, and so grow secure, and formal and carnal, heartless and spiritless, and think they have a dispensation hereby for any close hypocrisie or iniquity. I would let such know, that if they are not in the life and spirit of ordinances, in the spirit of faith and prayer, and a holy communion of Saints, beautified with a practical, holy, humble, heavenly, fruitful Gospel conversation, that they sin against the Lord, and be sure their sin will find them out, as *Moses* said to the *Reubenites*, and *Gadites*, Numb. 32. 23. I say it is Gospel Obedience that is so acceptable unto him. *As obedient children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15. And that it is so well pleasing a thing unto the Lord, and of such special efficacy and force, to stay or divert the Judgments of God from falling upon a Nation or people; that pathetical, or rather paternal wish of the Lord, seems to imply so much, *Psa.* 81. 13, to the end. *O that my people had*

had hearkened unto me, and Iſrael *had walked in my ways*; What then? *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries; The haters of the Lord ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves unto him; but their time ſhould have endured for ever. He ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the Wheat, and with honey out of the rock ſhould I have ſatisfied thee.* What an ardent deſire of the Lord was here, as to his peoples hearkening unto him, and walking in his ways, and ſee what the Lord would have done for them thereupon; He would have ſubdued their enemies, and ſo conſequently procured their peace; As *Nathan* told *David*, that they ſhould dwell in a place of their own, and move no more, and that the children of wickedneſs ſhould not afflict them any more, as before time, 2 *Sam.* 7. 10. He would have turned his hand againſt their Adverſaries; What's that? the hand of his Plagues and puniſhments; he would have taken off his Plagues and Puniſhments from them, and laid them upon his adverſaries; ſo ſaid *Job*, *Withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid*, Job 13. 21. that is, *put thy Plague and viſitation far from me*, So *Judges* 2. 15. It is thus rendred. *Whither-ſoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was againſt them for evil*, as the Lord had ſaid, and as the Lord had ſworn unto them, and they were greatly diſtreſſed, and what hand was this, but his ſore judgments, and among the reſt, this of the deſtroying Peſtilence, *Lev.* 26. 25. which he threatned ſhould cleave unto them, until he had conſumed them, *Deut.* 28. 21. So in 1 *Sam.* 5. 6, 11. It is ſaid, the hand of the Lord

was

was heavy upon the men of *Ashdod*, and he destroyed them, and smote them with *Emerods*, See also, *Ruth* 1. 13. *Lam.* 2. 8, 9. and *Act.* 13. 11. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves, those that oppressed them, should have subjected unto them, either willingly, or constrainedly, choose them whether. But their time should have endured for ever; his peoples time, the time of their prosperity and flourishing estate should have endured for ever; The meaning is, they should have had and enjoyed a long blessed and happy life. He would have fed them also with the finest of the Wheat, with the fat of the Wheat, the Flower of it, or the best and chiefest Corn, they should have had whatever was best for the maintenance of their life, as *Numb.* 18. 12. *Deut.* 32. 14. and *Psa.* 147. 14. *He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat*; And what more? With honey out of the Rock should I have satisfied thee, *Deut.* 32. 13. The Bees in the Land of *Canaan* used much to harbour in the rocks. But spiritually this rock doth signifie Christ, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. and the honey, that sweetness of speech, and those savoury and gracious words, which did issue from his mouth, being sweetness to the soul, and health to the bones, *Psa.* 19. 10. *Prov.* 16. 24. *Cant.* 4. 11. Noting by this manner of speech, that they should have had all things, both pleasant and profitable for the maintenance of their life, if their wickedness and disobedience had not stopped the course of his goodness and mercy. Take that concurrent place also, in *Isa.* 48. 18, 19. *O that thou hadst hearkened to my Commandements,*

then

then had thy peace been as a River, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea; thy seed also had been as the sand, and the off-spring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof, his name should not have been cut off, nor destroyed from before me. What a promise was here also upon the account of their obedience? their peace or prosperity rather should have been as a River, that is abounding and always lasting, as a River floweth continually and stoppeth not; And their righteousness as the waves of the Sea; that is, the blessed and happy estate of their Government; as the fruit of their righteousness; should as the Waves of the Sea, been exceeding abundant, flowing and flourishing; and their seed should have been as the Sand of the Sea for multitude; So *Isa.* 1. 12. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; If ye obey my commandements, ye shall eat the best things of the Land,* Job 21. 25 So Elihu in his speech to *Job, If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures; But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall dye without knowledge,* Job 36. 11, 12. See also, *Lev.* 26. 13. *Deut.* 6. 3. *and* 11. 22. *and* 26. 27. *and* 28. 15. What promises the Lord made upon the account of their obedience. More particularly to the thing in hand, that in *Deut.* 7. 12, 13, 14, 15. Is worthy of our best observation, where among many other things which the Lord promised as great and singular blessings upon that score, this is not the least nor meanest; *The Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases*

taſes of Egypt *upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.* What the evil diſeaſes of *Egypt* were, is well known to moſt; This of the noyſom deſtroying Peſtilence being one, *Amos* 4. 10. Let me add two or three places more in the New Teſtament, and then I ſhall draw to a Concluſion; *John* 8. 12. *I am the light of the World,* ſaith Chriſt, *he that followeth me, ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life;* *He that embraceth my Doctrine with a true faith, and obeyeth the ſame, ſhall not walk in the darkneſs of error and ſin, but ſhall have the light of life to bring him to everlaſting life;* So *John* 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there ſhall alſo my ſervant be; if any man ſerve me, him will my Father honour;* Can that man be in a miſerable or uncomfortable condition to be where Chriſt ſhall be? and what honour can be comparable to that which God the Father ſhall confer upon thoſe who ſerve the Lord Chriſt? I ſhall only add, *Rev.* 22. 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his commandements, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City,* to wit, *of the new and heavenly Jeruſalem, which deſcendeth out of Heaven from God, and commeth down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband,* Rev. 21. 2. Whereof ſee the deſcription, *verſ.* 10. And what this Tree of life is, See *Rev.* 22. 2. By this Tree of life is meant the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; Fitly called the Tree of life, in reſpect of his vivifying, conferring, and preſerving life unto them that eat thereof, which is but one; though he is ſaid to ſtand in the midſt of the ſtreet, and of either ſide of the River,

that

that is, his leaves and roots, is on both sides of the River, so that there is no want on either side. Hence Christ said, *to him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.* This I say is Christ himself, the Fountain and Author of our life; The Bread of Life, *Joh.* 6. 51. The Water of Life, *Joh.* 4. 7. The Resurrection and Life it self, *Joh.* 11. 25. And he stands by the River, because he never withereth, or is fruitless. A Tree planted by the Rivers of waters, is always green and fruitful; Christ alone is sufficient for life unto all, and to quicken all his elect for ever and ever. This Tree hath twelve manner of fruits, and yeildeth her fruit every moneth, and the leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the Nations; What does this hold forth, but the quickening vertue of Christs merits and spirit, which is vigorous and efficatious throughout the whole year; that is, for ever and ever, to preserve always this spiritual life, and this blessed refreshing, for the *Israel* of God, without any weakening or enfeebling, *Joh.* 15. 16. And mark in the close of this discourse, that the leaves of this Tree have a medicinal use for to preserve the health of the Nations; Not that there shall be any infirmities any more in the New *Jerusalem*, but that the healing of all infirmities which was wrought here by the merits and spirit of Christ, shall be thereby the same power for ever kept and preserved inviolate for all beleivers. See *Ezek.* 47. 12.

Now blessed are they that do his commandements, as touching, the not worshipping of the Beast and his Image, the forsaking of *Babylon*, and the

the faithful following of the Lamb, ſubjecting and ſubmitting to all his holy, heavenly, pure, evangelical inſtitutions, appointments, and commands, patiently and chearfully ſuffering for his ſake, in bearing witneſs unto the truth, if called thereunto, perſevering in the grace of Chriſt; doing juſtly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, ſuch ſhall have right to this Tree of Life, and enter in through the gates into the City. They ſhall have a right of enjoying Chriſt and his unſpeakable benefits, and be perpetual and moſt happy Inhabitants of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; And he that ſitteth on the throne ſhall dwell among them. *They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the throne ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, Rev. 7. 15, 16, 17. I ſhall add no more, but that of *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Conſider what I ſay, and the Lord give thee underſtanding in all things*, 2 Tim. 2. 7.

FINIS.